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Author's Note

~Author's Note~

The events that occur in this story do not correspond with those found in the Unknown Threat Series.

This story is from Bumblestripe's point of view.
Edit 2014: Most of the story is from Bumblestripe POV. I'm sorry that the first four chapters are shorter and they aren't quite as mature as the, um, gruesome death scenes that older me writes. But...I wrote them two years before the rest of the book and I've grown a lot as a writer. After I finish this I will rewrite the first four chapters.

Prologue

Prologue

I stared at her beautiful gray fur and felt a strong wave of emotion rise up. I couldn't let a cat like her walk away from me. I had to let her know how I felt about her.

I couldn't help but feel nervous as I walked up to her. She stopped eating her fresh-kill and looked up. "Hey, Bumblestripe," she meowed. "What is it?"

"Um, d-do you want t-to go hunting w-with me?" I stammered.

"As soon as I finish my fresh-kill," she replied.

"Alright," I meowed happily, trotting over to the camp entrance.

She joined me a short while later. "Where do you want to hunt?" I asked, feeling as nervous as I always did when I was alone with her.

She thought for a moment before replying, "Near the abandoned Twoleg nest."

On the way towards the abandoned Twoleg nest, I finally summoned the courage to say what I had been thinking for a long time. "Dovewing," I began nervously. "I love you. Do you want to be my mate?"

She stared at me for a long time with- was the sorrow in her sparkling green eyes? "I-I'm sorry, Bumblestripe," she meowed quietly. "I don't think we feel the same way about each other. How about we just be friends?"

My heart broke more with every word she spoke. Sudden anger rose up in my chest. "I don't need you as just a friend! In fact, I don't need you at all, you stupid she-cat!" I shouted. "I'm sick of caring about you when you don't care at all about me!"

"Bumblestripe..." Dovewing began, staring at me with pain in her eyes.

"Save it for a cat who cares!" I yowled.

I spun around and stomped back to camp.

Chapter One: A Shocking Discovery

Chapter One

I laid in my mossy nest in the warriors den, staring at ground. Every other cat was asleep, but I couldn't fall asleep myself. I kept replaying the scene with Dovewing in my head, wondering how things had gone so wrong.

Suddenly, I heard the sound of pawsteps and I looked up. Dovewing was padding out of the warriors den. As soon as she was gone, I crept out of the den and followed her scent trail. It led me to the secret entrance out of camp. *What is she doing?* I thought. *Why is she sneaking out of camp in the middle of the night?*

I followed her a long way, all the way to the ShadowClan border. Then, she walked out of Clan territories and over towards an abandoned Twoleg nest. She let out a loud purr as soon as she was a tail-length away. I watched in disbelief as a massive dark brown tom walked out of the abandoned Twoleg nest. Tigerheart?

I stared in shock as Tigerheart rested his tail gently on Dovewing's back and touched his nose to hers. Dovewing purred. "Oh, Tigerheart," she meowed happily.

The expression of affection and longing on her face made me look away. *She chose that piece of ShadowClan fox-dung over me!* I thought to myself. *How could I have been so blind?*

I couldn't bear to watch Dovewing with Tigerheart anymore. I turned around and walked back through the forest towards camp. I snuck back down through the secret entrance into the warriors den as the horizon was turning pink.

I rested my head on the ground and wondered if there was anything I could have done better to win Dovewing's heart. But I decided that

she wouldn't have loved me no matter what I did.

"Oh, Dovewing," I whispered to the fading stars. "Can't you see that I loved you first?"

Chapter Two: Misery

Chapter Two

It was sunhigh when Dovewing finally returned with two plump mice. When Squirrelflight asked where she had been, Dovewing replied, "Hunting."

My heart ached just from seeing her. I turned away and walked out of the camp.

I had walked a long time, and I suddenly realized where I was. Unconsciously, I had walked towards the place where I had seen Dovewing with Tigerheart.

I turned around and returned to camp. "Bumblestripe!" Squirrelflight shouted. "Where have you been?"

I ignored the ThunderClan deputy and grabbed a thrush off of the fresh-kill pile. "Bumblestripe!" Squirrelflight hollered with a harsher tone of voice. "Where have you been? You left at sunhigh and you just got back now, near sunset! With no prey or anything! So where were you have you been?"

I was not in the mood to be bothered by Squirrelflight. I turned around and shoved my nose in her face. "Leave me alone!" I snapped.

I half-heartedly nibbled at my thrush. I was starting to feel almost too exhausted to keep my eyes open. I let myself drift into a restless sleep.

***

Squirrelflight wanted me to go on the dawn patrol, but as soon as I found out that Dovewing was on the border patrol, I refused to go. Squirrelflight threatened to tell Bramblestar, but I didn't care. I didn't care about anything anymore. I just turned around without

saying anything, walked back into the warriors den, and fell back asleep.

Chapter Three: A Chat With The Deputy

Chapter Three

Squirrelflight woke me up at sunhigh. "Bramblestar wants to see you in his den," she hissed. "Now."

I turned my head away from her and refused to look at her. We were both silent for a moment. "Tell him I'm not coming," I meowed finally.

"What is wrong with you, Bumblestripe? You'll never attract a mate if you keep acting like this?" Squirrelflight hissed.

"I haven't attracted a mate anyways!" I spat.

Squirrelflight paused. "Oh, this is about you and Dovewing," she meowed. "Don't worry, she'll get over whatever happened and she'll become your mate. The same thing happened to Bramblestar and I, and no cat ever thought we would be together again...."

"You don't understand!" I hissed, interrupting her. "We can't be together, ever! She doesn't love me! She loves another cat!"

Squirrelflight hesitated, probably wondering what to say. "You'll find another cat," she replied after a long moment of silence. "You won't even remember that you loved Dovewing."

Another cat? I thought. *How could any she-cat ever be as beautiful as Dovewing?*

Yet, at the same time, Squirrelflight's words gave me a tiny bit of hope. Maybe I could somehow find another perfect she-cat and have her as my mate.

"Fine," I grumbled. "I'll go talk to Bramblestar."

"I'll tell Bramblestar that you don't need to talk to him if you agree to go hunting with Cloudtail now," Squirrelflight meowed.

I considered the offer for a moment. I didn't feel like doing a whole lot of anything, but hunting sounded better than being lectured by the ThunderClan leader.

"Fine," I meowed.

Chapter Four: Anger

Chapter Four

A quarter-moon had passed since my talk with Squirrelflight. For the first few days afterwards, I had completely ignored Dovewing, refusing to look at her, or talk to her when she tried to apologize to me.

Then, my sadness had turned into anger, which had slowly changed into hatred. Now every time I saw her, I would glare at her, and if she came any closer than a tail-length away from me, I would "accidentally" bump into her. I think she knew that I was doing it on purpose. I didn't care. She had torn my heart to pieces, and I would make her regret it for the rest of her life. I would make sure I got my revenge before I went to StarClan.

"Bumblestripe!" Squirrelflight called, standing near the camp entrance. "Come over here!"

I trotted over to Squirrelflight, wondering which patrol she wanted to put me on now. Ever since our discussion, she had been making sure that she put me on extra patrols. "What dumb patrol do you want me on now?" I sighed, not really wanting to go on yet another stupid patrol.

"I want you to join Dovewing's hunting patrol..." she began.

"DOVEWING'S?!?!?!" I screamed into her face.

Squirrelflight stepped back and pointed with her tail towards where Dovewing was standing with Icecloud. "Are you crazy?" I asked furiously. "I would never go hunting with that worthless piece of fox-dung even if she wasn't leading the patrol!"

"Bumblestripe, that's an order," Squirrelflight meowed calmly.

"I don't care!" I screeched. "Go find another cat to do it!"

"Go hunting with them! Or else I'll have Bramblestar kick you out of the Clan!" Squirrelflight yowled, finally losing control of her temper.

I lifted my paw and hit her on the head with my paw, and the blow certainly wasn't gentle. I then spun around and made sure I kicked up lots of dirt in her face as I stomped away.

"C'mon," I hissed, intentionally stepping on Dovewing's foot as soon as I was close enough to her. "Let's get this nightmare over with. Oh, and by the way, Dovewing, did I mention that I hate you?"

Chapter Five: A Simple Plan

A/N: Just so you know, this is the part where Bumblestripe is just beginning to go crazy. Tell me after reading this, do you think he's going to wind up going completely insane?

I couldn't bear to look at her as we passed through the forest. She was a traitor to her Clan, a disgrace to every cat that ever walked the earth.

My thoughts spun wildly around my head even more than ever before.

The silence was louder than a deafening boom of thunder. Every step of her paw made a burning pain sear up my side and I was left gasping for breath, in agony.

I was only dimly aware that Icecloud was with our patrol as well.

Dovewing glanced at the white-furred she-cat. "Icecloud, could you hunt alone for a few moments? Bumblestripe and I need to talk."

Icecloud nodded and padded away.

I gritted my teeth. "I have nothing to say to you."

"Well maybe I want to talk to you!" Dovewing spat.

I was already walking away but Dovewing chased after me.

"Please talk to me!" she pleaded. "I need to speak with you!"

Her words made me feel like a ShadowClan warrior was clawing at my heart. "Wouldn't you rather talk to Tigerheart?"

Dovewing froze like a kit on a Thunderpath, caught in the blinding glare from a monster's eyes. I almost walked away and left her like that. But the world spun as my thoughts of revenge and anger danced around my head. I swayed on my paws and closed my eyes,

feeling like the next gust of wind would sweep me off my feet and carry me up into the clouds.

This terrible she-cat caused all of your misery! A voice hissed in my head.

Before I could stop myself, I whipped around and lashed out with my claws. I struck her on the cheek and watched in fascination as blood inched down her face.

I was trembling from anger and my breath was coming in short, ragged gasps. It was the first time I had seen the light of terror in my victim's eyes. My victim's eyes would always be green in my mind, symbolic of the cat who had betrayed me.

I felt more powerful than I ever had in my life. Adrenaline coursed through my body, and I felt a surge of strength. Dovewing was at my mercy. If I chose to murder her right then and there, she wouldn't be able to stop me. I knew I'd never be able to kill her though. There was still weakness inside me, a weakness called love. But I was strong enough to make her life as miserable as she had made mine.

I yowled with rage and shoved her into a thorn bush. She snapped out of the daze she was in as thorns dug into her side. She pulled herself free, leaving behind a few tufts of gray fur, and hurried away from me.

I can't bear this and I can't live like this! I can't bring myself to kill her either though...

Staring at the scraps of fur on the thorns, I got an idea. *Kill Ivypool, and frame Dovewing. What would hurt her more than to see her sister's lifeless body and to be accused of her murder? The only thing that will give me pleasure now is to see her in pain, to watch her be banished and exiled by the cats who raised her.*

It was a simple idea, but sometimes the simplest of plans are the best ones.

Chapter Six: Icecloud and I

Chapter Six

I saw shadowy cats watching me from behind trees, sets of red eyes glowing from every bush. My beloved forest now haunted me, and I could've sworn I kept seeing a cat watching me from the shadows.

Voices began whispering in the wind that rattled the trees.

Look at the pathetic Bumblestripe!

Alone in life, and he'll be alone in death too!

Kill Dovewing you weakling!

Or just kill that mouse-brain Tigerheart!

Scared to kill? You are more of a coward than a kit!

"Stop!" I screeched aloud.

"Who are you talking too?" A shape melted out of the shadows. I stiffened before seeing the familiar face of Icecloud.

I sighed dejectedly.

Icecloud seemed concerned. "What's wrong? Is it Dovewing?"

I backed away as her coat seemed to change colors before my eyes. The fluffy white fur smoothed into a sleek dark brown pelt, and the icy blue eyes flashed a dark amber.

Before me stood the young, handsome tom that I hated the most. Tigerheart.

The scent of ShadowClan filled my nostrils and I unsheathed my claws. "What are you doing in ThunderClan territory?"

Tigerheart opened his mouth. "What do you mean?"

The voice didn't sound quite like his. It was smoother and softer, more ingratiating. "What's wrong with your voice?" I asked.

Tigerheart's eyes widened. "I'm sorry?"

Momentarily, I was jolted back to reality. Tigerheart's massive, muscular frame shrunk back into the skinny form of Icecloud.

I blinked a few times, certain that the pungent odor of ShadowClan still lingered in my nostrils, and shook my head as confusion filled my mind. "I don't know what's wrong with me. That stupid she-cat didn't just steal my heart; she stole my sanity too. I just... I just don't know what to do."

Icecloud looked uneasy and I couldn't blame her. I probably looked crazy...maybe I *was* crazy.

My world spun. A shadowy haze of blackness threatened to envelop me, to swallow me whole. I could distantly feel my legs collapsing beneath me. I fought my way back to consciousness to find Tigerheart standing over me, a triumphant gleam in his amber eyes, whispering, "She's mine."

I struggled to rise to my paws. To my surprise, Tigerheart helped me stand, shoving his shoulder against my side and pushing me onto my feet. The ShadowClan scent was overwhelming and I wrinkled my nose in disgust.

Tigerheart lifted his head. "She loves me and she couldn't give a mouse-tail about you!"

Rage made my vision blur to a red mist. My claws had eyes of their own; they aimed on their own accord at Tigerheart's throat. The tom shrieked in surprise and fell to the ground. A paroxysm of coughing seized him and scarlet blood bubbled in his throat. A spasm passed through his body as he struggled to suck air into his lungs. After a few heartbeats, the ShadowClan warrior fell still.

I turned my back on the dead tom, still quivering with fury. "You deserved it." I kicked dust over the lifeless body. "You deserved to

die."

I looked over my shoulder. "You never deserved to live a...at..."

My words caught in my throat. "At all..." *What have I done?*

I hadn't killed Tigerheart after all. I had murdered my kind, caring, innocent Clanmate. Icecloud was dead and there was nothing I could do to change it.

Chapter Seven: Hiding The Evidence

I knew I had to hide my scent from her fur. I found a patch of wild garlic nearby and rolled her body in it. My eyes darted around to make sure that no one was watching and I stopped every now and then to scent the air. No one was there but me.

Once Icecloud's body stank of garlic and not a trace of my scent could be detected, I began to scoop out pawfuls of soil to bury the body. She would never be found, and no cat would ever know what had happened to her.

I stopped, suddenly struck by a brilliant idea. I hid the lifeless form of Icecloud underneath a bush and dashed off. I skidded to a halt by the thorn bush I had pushed Dovewing into. I coughed as clouds of dust that I had kicked up in my abrupt halt hit my face.

I snagged a tuft of gray fur off of the thorns with a claw and momentarily breathed in the warm, familiar scent. *To think that I once spent my days daydreaming about you, lost in reveries of what could be*.

I pulled one more piece of fur off of the thorn bush. I then scampered back to where I had hidden Icecloud's body and dragged it out from under the bush. Slowly, carefully, deliberately, I placed the fur between her claws.

Guilt swelled in my throat but I pushed it down. I crouched beside the white-furred she-cat's body and smoothed her fur.

I felt my blood turn to ice. Her frosty blue eyes were still open and they seemed to be looking back at me, unblinking. A chill ran up my spine from the emptiness I saw in her gaze.

"I'm sorry," I whispered. "I didn't mean to."

Her eyes didn't move or blink like I half-expected them to; they just stared back into my own.

I closed her eyelids so that it looked as if she were only sleeping. "Perhaps it was for the best. I get the feeling that you won't be the last cat I kill. Only the first of many."

"Bumblestripe!" Dovewing was yelling my name somewhere in the distance. "Icecloud! Where are you two? It's nearly sundown, we need to head back to camp."

I checked one final time to be certain that no cat would find my scent on her fur. I hastily washed my own pelt to remove the pungent odor of garlic from my fur. I gave the body a final look.

"My revenge starts now."

Dovewing's voice was closer now. "Icecloud! Bumblestripe! Where are you?"

As I stood and raced in the direction of her voice, I kept seeing Icecloud's lifeless body over and over again in my head.

Dovewing narrowed her eyes. "Where's your prey?"

I shifted uneasily on my paws. "I didn't catch anything. C'mon, let's just go back to camp."

Dovewing rolled her eyes. "You must've been REALLY unlucky."

"Yeah," I agreed. "Really unlucky."

"What's that supposed to mean? I heard the note of sarcasm in your voice," she meowed.

I feigned innocence. "No, I meant it. I'm the unluckiest cat in the world! After all, I'm in the same Clan as you!"

I heard a loud sigh.

"Whatever, Bumblestripe. Let's just go back to camp."

A/N: Please comment your thoughts, I hope you enjoyed as I always do! :) At this point, Bumblestripe is officially crazy.

Chapter Eight: He Knows It's Me?

A/N: How did Dovewing not hear him kill Icecloud? I've asked myself that and decided she just wasn't paying attention xD

I didn't get any sleep that night. I padded out of the warriors den a little past sunrise, walking by Dovewing, who slept right next to the entrance.

It was a windy, cloudless day. A breeze buffeted my fur as I grabbed a small shrew. I had no appetite though, and was unable to swallow even a morsel. A few cats were starting to ask where Icecloud was.

"Where's Icecloud?"

"I haven't seen Icecloud since yesterday."

"Is she all right?"

"I hope she is."

Near sunhigh, when every cat was awake and Bramblestar was basking in the sunlight at the center of the clearing, Brackenfur's hunting patrol burst through the thorn tunnel and into camp. Toadstep and Lionblaze carried Icecloud's body between them. Gasps of shock came from my fellow Clanmates. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Dovewing at the back of the crowd, peering over the heads of her soon-to-be ex-Clanmates and trying to see what the commotion was about.

I have to pretend to feel something.

I allowed my neck fur to rise and let out a caterwaul of grief. "What happened?"

Brackenfur shook his head. "We found her out in the forest, dead. The murderer was a fool! He or she didn't even bury the body."

I blinked a few times and rushed over to her body, feigning disbelief. "Murderer? I'm sorry did you say murderer? Who would kill such a nice, loyal she-cat? Was it ShadowClan? I don't trust Blackstar."

Bramblestar came over and sniffed at Icecloud's body, then recoiled at the sharp odor. "The murderer tried to disguise the scent! All I can smell is garlic."

"I can't believe this. I *will* get revenge for her. She was a brave warrior. If only..." I let my voice trail off and lowered my head.

Brackenfur touched his muzzle to my shoulder in a comforting gesture. "It's not your fault, Bumblestripe. I will avenge her death too, and her killer will pay for slaughtering this innocent she-cat. She will be remembered as a great warrior."

Those words didn't comfort me, and only made my internal pain worse. If he knew the killer was me...but I nodded, still trying to

keep up the act. Ostensibly, I appeared to be stricken with grief but in my heart I was only concerned about my plan working. I had to keep my place in ThunderClan.

Bramblestar glanced at the marks on her neck. "Those were clearly made by a cat's claws. But who?"
I gritted my teeth and unsheathed my claws. "It has to be ShadowClan! The sneaky fox-hearts! Let's go attack them now!"

Bramblestar was still studying her body, but he shook his head at my suggestion, probably thinking of his sister, Tawnypelt. "It's not ShadowClan. I'm certain. Why? Because the killer forgot to hide one piece of evidence. But I don't like who it says it is...

He sighed. "Believe me, this cat will pay for it. I know who murdered Icecloud."

I let my eyes widen, begging the Dark Forest that he wouldn't say my name. "Who?"

He lifted his head and looked straight at me, amber eyes glowing with rage.

Author's Note Number 2: Cliffhanger! xD Hope you enjoyed guys, has Bumblestripe gotten caught? I have exams this week so I gotta study but I will try to write Chapter Nine tonight. I'm off of school on Thursday for summer break so expect this book to be finished in the next few weeks.

Chapter Nine: Successfully Framed

I felt my heart stop beating. I was like a kit standing in the middle of a Thunderpath, helpless and unable to do anything to save myself. It seemed like it was an eternity that he was looking at me with those amber eyes...he looked so much like Tigerheart...I tried to move my thoughts away from that name.

Bramblestar's gaze was cold. "I'm sorry, Bumblestripe. I think you're a nice cat and I genuinely like you..."

The whole Clan was looking at me, uncertainty in their eyes. I waited for the words that would ban me from ThunderClan forever. I would lose my home, my friends, and everything that used to matter to me.

But the surprising part? I couldn't feel anything. I had no emotions of any kind anymore, and if Bramblestar killed me for murdering Icecloud, what did it matter? I had nothing to live for...I was already dead inside anyways. Dovewing and Tigerheart had done that to me.

"But Dovewing is the murderer. I'm sorry to break your heart." Bramblestar whipped around to look at Dovewing, whose green eyes widened in terror.

I shook my head. "No! No, it couldn't be her!"

Dovewing gave me a grateful look. "Bumblestripe is right! This must be a mistake!"

Those eyes...they still melt my heart.

Whitewing rushed over to her daughter. "Why would you make such a foolish accusation, Bramblestar?"

"I can't allow myself to believe my daughter is a murderer!" Birchfall came and stood protectively by the gray she-cat, who was shaking with terror. "Why would you speak such nonsense, Bramblestar?"

"Come and see for yourselves," Bramblestar meowed.

Whitewing guided her kit over towards the ThunderClan leader. "What so-called 'proof' do you have?"

Bramblestar looked down at the body. "Look between her claws, and also at the fact that your daughter has scratches on her sides."

There, wedged between the white-furred she-cat's claws, was the scrap of gray fur. My plan had worked! Dovewing had been framed. *Good riddance, you pathetic she-cat...*

Dovewing shot me a panicked look; her eyes sent me a silent plea for help. "The scratches are from thorns! Bumblestripe you remember when you...when I..."

I stepped forward. "Don't look to me for help you...you fox-heart! I can't believe you of all cats would kill Icecloud!"

Ivypool marched over to her sister. "And to think you used to call me a traitor. It turns out that you are the one who's a traitor."

Dovewing watched as even her mother backed away from her in horror. "Ivypool...Whitewing..."

"What are you going to do, kill them too?" Birchfall sneered.

Ivypool wrinkled her nose in disgust. "You're a disgrace to our family and Clan. I guess I never knew you as well as I thought I did."

"I didn't do it!" Dovewing wailed.

"Yeah, sure." Bramblestar's voice was filled with sarcasm. "And we're supposed to believe that."

Birchfall turned away from his daughter. "I hate you."

Bramblestar glared at the she-cat. "I exile you from ThunderClan. If any of my warriors catch you on our territory after sunhigh, we will kill you, which is what you deserve. We will tell the other Clans not to let you on their land either at the next Gathering."

"Wait!" I wasn't really sure what I was doing. "I challenge Dovewing to fight me. If she beats me, we won't tell the other Clans what she did. If I win, we will send a messenger to go and tell all of them tonight."

"Who died and made you deputy?" Squirrelflight muttered. "Bossy know-it-all just like Bramblestar was."

Bramblestar hesitated. "Okay, but if I even suspect you went easy on her, the deal is off."

I looked at her, glad that I'd never have to see her again after this. "Do you accept?"

Tigerheart can have her. I don't want her anymore.

She nodded. "Okay."

"I hope Bumblestripe kills you!" Birchfall screeched from the crowd.

Whitewing just gave her daughter a long, sad look.

A/N: This book isn't even close to over there's still about 15 more chapters (possibly more) left. Hope you enjoyed as always, please share your thoughts with me in the comments!

Chapter Ten: A Battle

Dovewing leaned in close to me; her breath felt warm on my ear. "I didn't do it."

I met her gaze, my breath taken away yet again by those gorgeous green eyes. "You're just using me and playing with my emotions. You always were. I was blind to love you."

"I know you're trying to help me the most you can," she whispered. "You still love me."

I gritted my teeth. "That would imply I ever loved you."

I did. But that was before I knew you were a traitor.

She sighed miserably. "Thanks for doing this for me."

I unsheathed my claws. "You won't be thanking me soon. Now are you going to attack first, or should I?"

Dovewing leapt at me. I hit the ground and the force of the impact knocked the air out of my lungs. Gasping for breath, I kicked her in the stomach and knocked her off of me.

"KILL HER, BUMBLESTRIPE, KILL HER!" Birchfall screeched.

Bramblestar shot a glance at the senior warrior. "Stop distracting them."

I felt rage build deep inside me. Strength flooded through my body. Dovewing deserved to die a lonely, slow, miserable death. *She betrayed me and this Clan even if she didn't actually murder Icecloud.*

I charged towards her and slid off to one side, swiping my claws down her side. *An apprentice move, the first one they taught us at that. She can't even avoid that!*

Dovewing blinked with surprise as I neatly swept her hindlegs out

from under her. I planted my left forepaw on her chest and began to rake my claws across her side. She screamed in agony and I shuddered. *It still hurts me to see her in pain. But I'm just being weak. She deserves this and much more.*

I focused on my tangled mess of feelings and blocked them out, like a warrior stops his brain from thinking about the pain in a battle. I receded back into a numb, emotionless mental state and then resumed clawing at her stomach.

Dovewing writhed within my grasp, trying to escape but failing. I could see nothing but pure terror in her green eyes; I think she was worried I'd kill her. *Maybe I will.*

Dovewing fell still beneath my paws as she let out another scream. "OW!!!! Please, Bumblestripe...it h-hurts so bad...please stop!"

Birchfall cheered from the crowd. "Give her a slow, painful death, Bumblestripe!"

I relaxed my grip since she had stopped struggling and glanced for a moment down at my paws, which were stained with scarlet blood. That was a mistake. She heaved herself upward with all of her remaining strength. I staggered backwards and lost my balance, landing on my right side with my belly exposed.

Her eyes glowed with uncharacteristic rage. "Let's see how you enjoy this."

Before I could climb back to my paws, her forepaw was pressing down on my chest, squeezing the air out of my lungs. I opened my mouth and gasped for breath, feeling dizzy and light-headed from lack of oxygen.

Then next thing I knew, her claws were digging into my stomach. Flames shot through my whole body, filling me with a burning sensation. I gritted my teeth to keep myself from releasing a yowl of agony.

I tried kicking her in the stomach to knock her off of me again, but she had a tight grip. The only result was a muted gasp of pain.

"Just die already, Dovewing, just die!" Birchfall shouted.

Her father's words seemed to distract her and I felt her grip loosen ever so slightly. I slithered out of her grasp and scrambled to my feet. Before she could react, I sprang onto her back. My greater weight brought her cascading to the ground.

I raked my claws across her stomach over and over again as she howled in agony repeatedly, the sound echoing across the hollow. Birchfall was screeching at me to finish her off while ignoring Bramblestar as he ordered him to stop talking. I waited until she wailed, "I surrender!" to quit.

She struggled to her paws, but as soon as she stood, her legs buckled underneath her. She lay on the ground, eyes half-closed and having difficulty breathing. The grass was stained crimson from the blood oozing from the wound on her stomach.

She tried again to rise to her feet, and this time didn't fall over immediately. She took a few wobbly, shaky steps before collapsing again. *Maybe she'll die. I hope she dies from blood loss.*

A/N: Thanks for reading, hope you enjoyed, please comment!

Chapter Eleven: Squirrelflight Is Next

Birchfall gave me a nod of approval. "Great job, Bumblestripe! Time for the death blow!"

Dovewing tried a final time to rise to her feet. She staggered forward a few steps and somehow made it out of camp. It felt good to see her suffer.

I followed her through the thorn tunnel. She was leaning against a tree, needing something or someone to support her weight. I watched as she limped a few more tail-lengths and then I turned around.

Bramblestar looked at me as I returned to the stone hollow. "You fought well, Bumblestripe. Rosepetal has volunteered to go tell the other Clans tomorrow morning, so that she can wait for the dawn patrol instead of trespassing without permission at night."

Tigerheart POV

I snuck out of the warriors den, careful not to wake any of the other warriors, and walked out of the camp entrance, trying to act casual in case I was caught, so I didn't look too suspicious. As soon as I was out into the familiar pines, I raced towards the ThunderClan border, excited to see the gorgeous gray she-cat that I loved.

I stopped as I saw a lifeless form at the border from a distance, lying in a pool of blood. I ran closer to see who it was.

My eyes widened in horror. Dovewing was motionless on the ground and there was a deep wound in her stomach.

Rage filled me. I grabbed her gently by the scruff. She looked so peaceful, as if she were sleeping. The pale white moonlight turned her soft fur to silver. I didn't know what else to do, so I carried her back to our camp, unable to tell if she was breathing or not. *Please, StarClan, don't let it be too late.*

"I will kill whoever did this to you," I whispered.

I arrived at the ShadowClan medicine cat den and brought her inside. "Littlecloud!"

Littlecloud seemed surprised as he sat up groggily. "Tigerheart? What is this?"

"I couldn't sleep tonight so I went to go hunting." The lie slipped out of my mouth. "I decided to go by the ThunderClan border and I found her body here. I can't tell, is she dead?"

I tried to act like I didn't care, but inwardly I was begging StarClan

that he said no.

Normal POV

It was the next morning and Rosepetal had already left. The she-cat was going to WindClan first, then RiverClan, and lastly ShadowClan.

Squirrelflight had just finished organizing the patrols for the day. To my surprise, for once I hadn't been assigned to one. *Finally! It'll be nice to have a day off.*

I felt uneasy. I had enjoyed battling Dovewing; it was fun for me to watch her collapse onto her side, hardly able to stand. It was a strange feeling, and it's hard to explain unless you've been in my situation before. But once you kill one cat, you have this need to kill more. Murdering cats is such an addicting thing. It horrifies you at first, but you need to come back and do it again to satisfy the voices that scream at you inside your head. It makes you feel stronger the more you do it, as if nothing can break you, and eventually you learn to live for that feeling and that feeling alone. You become imperturbably calm. You grow to be so emotionless that it numbs all of your inner pain. You long for blood to stain your claws and for the ground to be littered with the dead bodies of warriors that you killed, nothing else. And if you try to stop being a murderer, you only feel weak and like a coward.
It worried me. I wasn't sure how long I could contain those feelings. They were overwhelming and they slowly took over every part of my mind. They were impossible to control forever; however, I hoped I could keep up this act for a little while.

The annoying ginger deputy walked over to me. The Dark Forest knows, I hated Squirrelflight almost as much as I despised Dovewing and Tigerheart. She thought her ideas were always right, and if you tried to tell her otherwise, it was like the Great Battle broke out all over again. Although Tigerstar's attack was more tolerable than her screaming if you disagreed with her. She had

such an arrogant personality, and she was the last cat I would've ever chosen to be my deputy if I was Bramblestar. She had the largest ego of any cat around the lake.

Squirrelflight's eyes had the usual before-I-say-anything-just-know-I'm-right gleam in them. "Bumblestripe, I need to talk to you."

I gulped. "Okay. Talk to me then."

"No." Squirrelflight shook her head, seeming frustrated. "Alone. Outside of camp."

I hesitated. This could be a great chance to kill her! I'd never liked her anyways; ThunderClan would be better off with a different deputy. Squirrelflight's fiery temper couldn't be tolerated from a cat in a leadership role. But I had to make sure no cat knew I was with her or else I'd look suspicious. What if they knew it was me who murdered her?

But, if she wanted to talked to me, then she might know that I killed Icecloud. And that would mean I had no choice but to send her to StarClan early.

I looked her in the eye. "Very well. Meet me at sunhigh by the training hollow."

A/N: Did you guys enjoy Tigerheart POV? :) I hope you did, please share your thoughts with me in the comments!

Chapter Twelve: It Was You

Squirrelflight had already left the camp to go to the training hollow. I had convinced her that it would be best if she left first because we didn't want to talk to each other close to camp and have other cats overhear.

I climbed the Highledge and entered Bramblestar's den. "Hey Bramblestar, where's Squirrelflight?"

The dark brown tabby thought for a moment. "I don't know. She should be in camp."

"Well I can't find her and I'm sure she'll want to put me on another stupid patrol this afternoon," I meowed. "So can you tell her I'm going to collect some marigold for Jayfeather? His supply is running low so he asked me to get some."

Bramblestar, being the gullible fool that he was, believed me. "Of course. Do you want me to get Molepaw or Cherrypaw to help you?"

I shook my head, already backing out of the den. "No, I'm good, but thanks anyways. Bye, Bramblestar!"

You're a mouse-brain, Bramblestar. The Clan needs someone intelligent leading them. I guess I have to add you to my list of cats to kill. I should just kill half of the Clan I suppose; they're useless.

I left the den just in time to see Millie hurrying out of Jayfeather's den and rolled my eyes in disgust. *Perhaps it's not completely Dovewing's fault I'm a murderer. If I fell off a cliff and died, Millie would probably say, "I don't have time for that right now! I'm busy feeling sorry for myself and Briarlight!"*

Millie grabbed a mouse from the fresh-kill pile and then scurried back to her precious Briarlight, her only kit. *I guess Bramblestar has a little longer to live. I will kill Millie, bury her body on WindClan*

territory, and then nobody will ever know what happened to her. No, actually, I have a better idea. I will tell Bramblestar that she told me she hates being a warrior and she decided to return to kittypet life. That will be the equivalent of murdering Graystripe so I don't have to worry about him. Maybe that weak, dumb old tom will finally retire to the elders den then.

I unsheathed my claws as I watched her disappear inside the den. *You will be the next one to go.*

I padded out of camp and found Squirrelflight waiting in the training hollow. I raced down the slope and skidded to a halt. "What did you want to talk to me about?"

Squirrelflight sighed. "Not here. Let's go to the half-bridge by the ShadowClan border."

I followed her, wondering if she knew my secret. We arrived at the half-bridge a little after sunhigh. The ginger she-cat looked into my eyes for a moment, saying nothing.

Being impatient as I was, I finally spoke. "Well? Stop wasting my time and speak!"

"How do you feel about Dovewing being exiled from the Clan?" Squirrelflight shifted on her paws, seeming awkward. "Are you upset? I want to make sure you're okay."

"Why do you care?" I snapped. "Are you my mother? I didn't think so! Then stop acting like it!"

Squirrelflight seemed taken aback. "Calm down, Bumblestripe, I'm trying to help you. I guess you aren't willing to talk about Dovewing. So what do you think about Icecloud's murder?"

I gave a bitter laugh. "You don't want to know."

"Yes, I do. C'mon tell me!" Squirrelflight insisted.

Do I really want to kill her right now? "Well, if you really want to know, you'll have to look up as far as you can and stare at the sky until I tell you to look back at me."

Squirrelflight looked confused but she did as I said. I inched closer, unsheathing my claws.

I raised a paw. "Now close your eyes and think about what the sky looks like today. Anything that stands out. Keep thinking about it until I say to open your eyes and then tell me what you thought."

Squirrelflight once again followed my instructions. "Somehow, I think this has nothing to do with your thoughts on Icecloud's death."

I chuckled. "Oh yes it does. You'll see what I mean in a moment."

I slashed my claws across her throat in one swift strike. Her legs buckled beneath her and a faint screech escaped her mouth. I watched as her legs jerked convulsively and blood poured out of the fatal gash in her neck.

"Now do you see what I mean?" I sneered, watching her eyes widen as a truth suddenly dawned on her.

"It...was...y-you..." she choked out, her voice faint and barely audible.

"Of course it was," I purred.

A/N: I have given all of the chapters names now like this one is It Was You ;) Hope you enjoyed as always, I'm really wanting to see a lot of comments on this chapter, I NEED to know your thoughts.

Chapter Thirteen: Blaming ShadowClan

I watched as her flanks fell still. I glanced across the border, which we were right next to, and wondered if I should hide the body in ShadowClan territory. But then, I got a better idea. Make it seem like ShadowClan killed the deputy, and then start a war with them. I could be able to accidentally-on-purpose kill Tigerheart and make Dovewing's life even more of a nightmare, since I had no doubt she had sought refuge in her forbidden lover's Clan. Perhaps I would finish her off.

I dragged her across the ground by the scruff and rolled her lifeless body in the ShadowClan scent, thoroughly covering her with the smell of our enemies. I left the body by the half-bridge for the dawn patrol to find.

I crossed over the abandoned Twoleg path and stopped at the stream just beyond it. I washed my paws and then sniffed at my fur to make sure there were no traces of Squirrelflight or ShadowClan. I padded back towards camp.

Before entering the stone hollow, I grabbed a few buds of marigold just in case Bramblestar saw me. The dark brown tabby was eating a mouse by the thorn tunnel, and looked up as I emerged into the hollow. I was hardly able to meet his amber eyes because I was worried he'd see in my eyes that I had murdered ThunderClan's deputy.

"That took a while, Bumblestripe. Where were you?" Bramblestar didn't look too suspicious, but I still felt a pang of worry.

"Fetching the marigold. I accidentally grabbed the wrong herb and I didn't realize it until I was almost back here," I lied.

Bramblestar nodded. "Oh, okay. Well, go leave that in the medicine cat den. Jayfeather's out collecting some catmint and tansy for leaf-

bare from the abandoned Twoleg nest, but I'm sure he will thank you when he returns.

Bramblestar is such a fool. First of all, he didn't even ask what the "wrong herb" was. He's such a gullible mouse-brain. And does he really think Jayfeather would ever thank anyone for anything? He's the grumpiest medicine cat ever to exist!

I dropped the herbs at the entrance to the den. Jayfeather wouldn't even know who brought them. I stepped back out into the clearing, watching the sunset that was turning the sky orange and pink. A few dark gray clouds were inching their way towards WindClan territory, and would probably bring rain to the moor this evening.

I thought of Squirrelflight's lifeless body by the half-bridge, anticipating the war tomorrow would bring. "I hope you enjoy this, Tigerheart."

Tigerheart POV
Littlecloud listened to see if she was still breathing. "She's alive but barely. She's suffered a lot of blood loss and I'm not sure if she is going to make it. It's pretty clear she got attacked by something or someone. Did you do this to her?"

I was horrified. I would never do this to her! I would prefer that I was killed by whoever hurt her than having to watch her suffer. I would do anything to protect her, but I had failed to keep her safe. If she died, it would be my fault. I didn't want to live at all without her. "No, I just found her by the border and decided to bring her back to you."

I silently said, *Please save her Littlecloud. Please*.

Oh StarClan, don't take her away from me.

I tried to get some rest in the warriors den, but I was certain that I wouldn't be able to fall asleep so I decided to just pretend that I was asleep.

The next thing I knew, I was waking to yowls of alarm.

I scrambled out of my nest and hurried out of the den to see

Snowbird and Ratscar escorting Rosepetal into camp.
Blackstar stormed out of his den to see what the commotion was about and narrowed his eyes when he saw the ThunderClan she-cat. "What are you doing here?"

Rosepetal met his gaze. "There's a murderer on the loose. She killed one of ThunderClan's brave and loyal warriors. We won't forget Icecloud."

I blinked in surprise. *Icecloud was killed? Who would kill her or have any reason to? Did they hurt Dovewing too?*

"Who's the murderer?" Blackstar asked the question I was thinking.

Maybe it's Whitewing. She and Icecloud never liked each other if I remember correctly. But why would she hurt her own daughter if the murderer was who nearly killed Dovewing? Did they get into a fight or something? But honestly, I can't picture a mother trying to murder her own kit. Perhaps it was Ivypool? She used to train in the Dark Forest; I know because I saw her there. And she's always been jealous of her sister.

I never expected her reply. "Dovewing."

A/N: Thanks for reading guys, I really appreciate all the nice things you guys have said about this story. You are the best fans an author can have and I honestly mean that. I love reading your comments, they make my day :)

Chapter Fourteen: Another Death

A/N: Unless you guys don't want me to...I will be changing the name of this story to Bumblestripe's Insanity/Madness. Could help me pick which one, please? Anyhow thanks for reading this enjoy! Sorry it's short but I hope you enjoy!

Tigerheart POV

My jaw dropped. "No...just no...it can't be her!"

My sister, Dawnpelt, wrinkled her nose and gave me a weird look. "Why not? It's nothing less than I'd expect out of pathetic ThunderClan cats! I mean look at Jayfeather! He's a murderer who got away with it!"

Even though Flametail had visited each of the medicine cats and confirmed that Jayfeather didn't murder him, Dawnpelt still insisted he was a killer. I will never be sure what her grudge against the grumpy medicine cat is about, though.

Dawnpelt is just a frog-brain. Dovewing isn't pathetic.

However, other cats, such as my parents, Rowanclaw and Tawnypelt, and Blackstar, our leader, were looking suspicious as well. I couldn't have them guess that I was completely and hopelessly in love with the gorgeous gray-furred she-cat.

I searched for something to say. "I mean like, it doesn't make sense! What would Dovewing get out of murdering Icecloud, and what reason would she have to do it?"

"You can't understand the logic of a murderer," Blackstar muttered.

Rosepetal had already left; her job was done. She had delivered the

horrible message to ShadowClan. She was probably almost out of our territory already since our camp is very close to the ThunderClan border, which is always a concern for us.

Pinenose was panicking. "I think Dovewing is in our camp! I saw her in the medicine cat den! Our kits might be killed overnight!"

"Is this true, Littlecloud?" Blackstar asked. "Bring her out here."

The medicine cat lowered his head. "There's no need to. She's dead. She lost too much blood to make it through the night."

Blackstar breathed a sigh of relief. "Good. It's for the best that she's gone to the Dark Forest. ShadowClan doesn't need a murderer in its midst."

Meanwhile, my world was collapsing. *Dovewing is dead?*

Her body was brought into the clearing. I felt dizzy as I stared at her soft gray fur and the world spun. Everything shrunk to a small red dot and then I felt my legs buckle as all feeling left my body. I collapsed onto the grass and receded into the peaceful safety of unconsciousness.

Normal POV

Dark gray trees stretched up towards the sky, which I couldn't see through the dark leafy canopy that blotted out all natural light. However much I strained my eyes trying to catch a glimpse of a patch of blue sky or a wisp of cloud, I couldn't see it. A sickly silvery mist coiled around my paws.

I peered through the darkness, knowing exactly where I was. "Show yourself. I'm not scared of you."

An almost-transparent tortoiseshell she-cat with amber eyes materialized in front of me and gave a bitter laugh. "You should be."

"Mapleshade," I said, acknowledging her presence with a dip of my head.

Mapleshade circled around me, giving me a careful inspection. "You have done a great job with the first two murders. Now, the Dark Forest

wants to help you to kill off the rest of the Clan."

I stormed off at this. "I don't need help. Not from you, or any cat, dead or alive."

"Stop!" She had caught up to me and stepped in front of me. "You want to succeed? You want to learn the true skills of deception and murder..."

I glared at her. "I've been doing pretty fine on my own. Now leave, because I'm not afraid to kill you too."

Mapleshade didn't try to convince me to join her anymore. I think she knew she wouldn't be able to. I was stubborn about being left to my own devices. She didn't try to physically stop me from leaving either, because she knew I was too strong to restrain. And even if she could stop me, I don't think she would hurt one of her own. Not when I'm preparing to kill off my whole Clan. Except for maybe Blossomfall. When I'm leader, she'll be my deputy.

The Dark Forest. What worthless, despicable creatures. They're only here because they failed.

I won't wind up here.

I won't fail.

Chapter Fifteen: ShadowClan Will Pay

The next day seemed normal to all other cats, but I knew a storm was coming. It started when Bramblestar padded out of his den and wondered aloud, "Where's Squirrelflight? I haven't seen her since she organized patrols yesterday." The dark brown tabby was forced to select the cats for the morning patrols himself.

I foresaw the dawn patrol returning with her body, the accusations flying, and the rage towards ShadowClan. I knew enough about Bramblestar to know that his grief would make him reckless. Maybe if he flew into battle without properly thinking...I wouldn't have to do anything. I wasn't sure how many lives he had left but maybe the battle with ShadowClan would take care of him.

On a completely unrelated note, Rosepetal had informed us that Dovewing had taken refuge in ShadowClan...haha, isn't it obvious what they'll make of that fact along with "ShadowClan's" murder of Squirrelflight?

Sure enough, shortly before sunhigh, Foxleap, Ivypool, Sorreltail, and Cinderheart returned with Foxleap and Ivypool carrying the dead deputy between them. Bramblestar's eyes stretched wide in horror and he raced over toward the body.

The leader recoiled and Bumblestripe saw his eyes were glowing with fury. "Her body reeks of ShadowClan!"

Gasps of horror escaped the lips of many warriors.

Birchfall looked outraged. "Dovewing strikes again!"

"ShadowClan will pay!" Bramblestar hissed, not doubting for a moment that ShadowClan were the killers.

Foxleap, who had been leading the patrol, narrowed his eyes. "They

didn't try to hide it at all; they left the body right in the open where they knew that we'd find it."

"The fox-hearts!"

"Let's kill all of them!"

"Bramblestar, we MUST attack them now!"

"We should kill Blackstar at the Gathering in two nights!"

"Avenge Squirrelflight's death!"

"For our deputy!"

"Let's shred the fox-hearts in memory of her!"

It seemed like everyone was saying something but me. No one had noticed my silence yet I decided to speak up anyways, so I padded up to Bramblestar and somehow looked him right in the eye. "When do we attack? Tomorrow?"

Bramblestar's voice was so cold that he sounded like a different cat. "No. There's no time to wait. They'll be expecting an attack, but not tonight. We leave now! For Squirrelflight!"

"For Squirrelflight!" I echoed along with a many others, trying to make it sound heartfelt. "Make sure I get to come with the patrol, please, Bramblestar! I will shred those fools and then I will finish Dovewing off for good. It's time to put her plotting to an end! Send her to the Dark Forest where she belongs!"

Bramblestar was looking right at me, and yet it seemed as if he was seeing right through me at something else behind me. His gaze was distracted and unfocused. "Very well. Bumblestripe, you will come with me along with Lionblaze, Birchfall, and Ivypool."

Lionblaze looked shocked. "Bramblestar...only four cats? Are you mad?"

"Maybe," Bramblestar muttered. "I guess Foxleap can come too."

Lionblaze was about to protest, but stopped himself. He exchanged a glance with Cinderheart that Bumblestripe didn't understand. Maybe he was glad she wasn't going to this slaughter. Our patrol stood no chance. I would find Tigerheart and tell him some lie about Bramblestar and Dovewing to get him to kill the ThunderClan leader. No, maybe I'd force him to do it by threatening him with my knowledge of his illegal relationship.

And then I'd kill him unexpectedly. Not just because of my personal grudge against him. Because he'd know too much about my own involvement in Bramblestar's death...

And who knows? Maybe I'd get rewarded somehow. Because, after all, it will look like I was just getting revenge for my leader's death!

We left the camp immediately.

Good-bye, Bramblestar...say good-bye to this cruel world.

A/N: Yes we're getting to the battle! Thanks so much for your comments guys, please let me know if you like the new cover! :)

Chapter Sixteen: At ShadowClan's Camp

This is it.

Bramblestar raced through the forest towards ShadowClan. Hatred and grief had to have been giving him energy. His paws caught on a few roots but he continued on even though he was noticeably limping. He was pulling ahead of us, as the rest of his tiny battle patrol were trying to avoid tripping, navigating a safer path through the woods.

"Bramblestar!" Foxleap called, panting. "Wait up!"

He stopped with reluctance. I examined his paws and noticed blood oozing from a fresh cut on his front right leg.

Lionblaze seemed hesitant. "Please slow down, Bramblestar? And let's stay here for a moment so we can catch our breath?"

Bramblestar waited for all of about five heartbeats. "Okay, let's go. C'mon!"

There was this strange sense of urgency about him, as if he was on an important mission. He just couldn't see that he was a piece, a toy perhaps, in another cat's game. No, what a poor analogy for his circumstances...perhaps Bramblestar could be compared to a piece of prey, a mouse maybe, being stalked by a unseen predator. The mouse doesn't see the hunter until claws sink into its neck and it's gone.

I am the hunter, stalking the prey. Wise enough to know that I need to bide my time, but also aware that I couldn't wait too long. The timing has to be just right. The mouse must never hear, feel, scent, or see me coming with unsheathed claws. And if I did this right, the possibilities were endless. Especially considering that Bramblestar hadn't appointed a deputy before he left.

The thought of me, a murderer, leading ThunderClan...things would change and things would change very quickly. Kindness would be an elder's tale for kits, if I let the elders live. I would rule over the whole forest, and I would have a long reign. Anyone who disobeyed me would be killed mercilessly without warning.

We were there before I knew it. Bramblestar marched straight into their camp. I made a hasty decision.

I dove into some bushes right outside of the camp. The other cats didn't notice my absence and I watched as they all hesitated before following their leader.

Perhaps Bramblestar is even crazier than I am.

Blackstar hurried out of his den, looking genuinely surprised but not hostile. Of course he was surprised, it's not like ShadowClan actually killed Squirrelflight. "Hello, Bramblestar. What are you doing here?"

Suddenly, I spotted a lifeless body by the warriors den. Gray fur neatly groomed. Legs folded up against her stomach. Eyes shut, flanks still.

It could've been any cat, but I knew somehow with complete certainty that it was Dovewing, even from this far away.

"It's what you deserved," I hissed, hoping she heard me from StarClan. "I don't regret it at all."

It was true. How did I ever love her? She was a mouse-brained traitor who deserved death. Justice reigns supreme. I delivered the punishment that she needed. I'm glad I did. I have no regrets about any of my actions.

I'd already decided Blossomfall will be my deputy when, not if, when I became leader. My sister was the only cat I might not have hated that day.

Meanwhile, in the ShadowClan camp, Bramblestar's neck fur was bristling. "You know what this is about, you murdering fox-hearts!"

Blackstar was taken aback and looked insulted. "What? Us, murderers? ThunderClan is the one with murderers in its midst!"

He doesn't know how right he is about that one.

"We found your scent on her body!" Bramblestar roared.

"What are you..." Blackstar broke off as Bramblestar crashed into him, barreling him over and preparing for the death blow.

It was over before it started. Olivenose leapt at Bramblestar as Ratscar clawed at his back. The other three ThunderClan warriors desperately flung themselves into battle, trying to protect their leader. They were swarmed by a multitude of ShadowClan warriors and vanished under a bunch of dark pelts.

I sat back and watched from my hiding place. Now it was time to return to my camp and tell the Clan I was the only one to escape. I wouldn't have to do anything for Bramblestar to die.

I couldn't believe or comprehend what I saw next.

Chapter Seventeen: The Real Battle

Just as I was about to crawl out of my hiding place, a blur of color swept by, not noticing me. A parade of warriors charged into the camp and hurtled through the thorn tunnel. I blinked in surprise as the ShadowClan cats were dragged away from their victims. Lionblaze was the only one who wasn't bloody and battered and lying on the ground, unable to get back up. Bramblestar was completely motionless so I assumed he was losing a life.

Realizing I would look suspicious if I came back unharmed, I raced into the midst of the warring cats and pushed my way through the crowd until I spotted him. Tigerheart.

The dark brown tabby was fighting Blossomfall. She leapt backwards, out of reach, as he sprang into the air and tried to land on her back. I came closer as Tigerheart struck her on the head with a forepaw and she tumbled to the ground.

He planted a massive forepaw on her chest as she writhed beneath his grasp. His amber gaze locked with hers. I saw myself in his eyes, that crazed, wild look. His breaths were ragged and uneven. Blood seeped out of a long wound on his side.

I couldn't have my deputy die at my least favorite ShadowClan cat's paws, could I?

I dashed towards the tom and barreled into him. He went flying off of Blossomfall and onto the ground. He hit his head on a rock.

Everything happened in slow motion. For once, I hadn't intended for this to happen.

His head twisted at an unnatural angle and a sickening crack echoed around the camp. The next thing I knew, Dawnpelt's claws were tearing chunks of fur out of my spine. I gritted my teeth to

hold in a yowl of agony.

"Turn and face me, so I can slit your throat! You coward! You murdered my other brother!" she hissed.

I blinked, noticing the battle had halted. "I didn't mean to! It was an accident! I swear by StarClan! I was just protecting my sister and when I knocked him off of her he hit his head the wrong way on that rock!"

"Lies!" I felt Dawnpelt's teeth sink into my tail.

Suddenly, I whipped around and sliced my claws across her cheek. She snarled with fury and lowered her head, ramming it into my chest.

Gasping for air, I felt my body hit the ground. I tried to move but couldn't. I was completely frozen like the lake in the middle of leaf-bare.

And then over and over again. My brain couldn't process the agony. Her claws raked across my stomach so many times. I felt weak and dizzy as I saw my blood soak the grass. I screamed as the pain took over me. My vision blurred and the world was covered by a haze of red. Dawnpelt just laughed as I cried out in pain.

Nobody moved to help me. I could tell they wanted to, but just like me, they were rooted to the spot. Perhaps it was fate. Was StarClan punishing me for murdering Icecloud, Dovewing, Squirrelflight, and Tigerheart?

Dawnpelt chuckled as she prepared for the death blow. "Say good-bye, murderer!"

So this was it. There was nothing I could do as her paw swung down towards me. My life flashed before my eyes. Playing with Briarlight and Blossomfall as kits. Becoming an apprentice. My warrior assessment. Briarlight's accident. My warrior ceremony, overshadowed by grief. Dovewing. The Great Battle. And then the murders I had achieved.

It was over. It had taken an eternity and a single heartbeat at the

same time but I had witnessed my whole life again.

It was the worst feeling in the world, complete and utter helplessness. Then a strange peace set in. It was comforting. I braced myself for the pain that would come and waited for death to take me.

Dawnpelt's released her tight grip on me as someone knocked her away. Wait, was that Blackstar pinning her to the ground?

The world melted away as I blacked out.

A/N: Sorry it's short hope you enjoyed anyways!

Chapter Eighteen: After the Battle

After the battle, Bumblestripe's body was buried in the quiet shade of a tall oak. Nobody ever learned the truth about him, and perhaps it was for the best...okay I'm done messing with you guys he isn't dead I'm just kidding okay here's the real chapter. Sorry if you get upset about that fake segment up there xD

Dawnpelt writhed beneath the strong black forepaw that held her to the ground. "What are you doing? He killed my brother! Let me finish him off!"

Blackstar's eyes were cold as ice. "I saw it happen. But it was an accident. Bumblestripe is a good cat. He would've never killed any warrior intentionally. He was just protecting his sister."

Oh, really? Good cat? Accident? Never killed any warrior? Well, isn't that funny?

So it was Blackstar who had pinned Dawnpelt to the ground. Nice to know.

I wondered if I was dead and watching this as a ghost. I wondered if Mapleshade would come in a moment to lead me to the prison called the Dark Forest. After all, I had no hopes of making it to StarClan. Had I failed? I had sworn I would not, sworn I would never fail.

Blackstar turned to face Bramblestar. "Take your cats and go home. There's been enough death for one day. This battle was unprovoked and unnecessary."

I couldn't feel my body, and that was frightening. I was about to panic when I felt a dull ache in my spine and a searing pain shoot up my side and my stomach. My head throbbed and I felt dizzy as I clawed my way back into consciousness.

The sickening, overpowering, bitter scent of herbs hit my nostrils. I struggled to suck air into my lungs and every breath was agony.

But that didn't matter.

What mattered was that I was alive.

Through blurred vision, I made out the emotionless face of Jayfeather. His blind blue eyes revealed nothing. He pushed a pile of herbs towards me. "Finally, you're awake. Great StarClan, you had every cat in camp panicking. Bramblestar was whining like a kit when he came in to check on you. 'Jayfeather, please save him! Oh Jayfeather, I don't wanna lose a loyal warrior cuz then I will be very sad! And you don't want that! Jayfeather, I will get angry if he dies!' Well if you had died it would've been his fault for being an idiot. Now eat these so that you'll get better and I can make Bramblestar shut up."

I tried to sit up but couldn't stop the yowl of agony as fire ignited on my side and quickly traveled from my lower body to my head. I could picture the flames eating at my flesh, consuming it. I was certain I would see them if I looked at my wounds. But when I took a glance I only saw pale, pink scars that laced across my left side and my stomach.

I licked up the herbs. They tasted bitter and I coughed, tempted to spit them out. I swallowed with reluctance and then laid as still as possible, because even the slightest movement hurt.

I closed my eyes, the taste of the herbs still in my mouth, and eventually drifted into a dreamless sleep.

When I woke, I noticed Briarlight in one corner of the den, quietly sorting herbs. I ignored her and pretended as if I was still asleep.

My side felt numb, and I assumed Jayfeather had put some herb on my wounds. There were some cobwebs plastered on the largest cuts.

I heard some scraping sounds and opened my eyes a little bit, just enough to make out Briarlight dragging herself over to me. "I know you're awake."

I groaned. "Just leave me alone. I don't want to talk to you. After all, I bet Millie didn't even give me a second glance when she came in to visit."

"Oh, so you're jealous now? Of me? Out of all the cats in this Clan, you're jealous of me!" Briarlight glared at me as if I had killed her mother...which might happen soon. "When I'm crippled and I can't hunt and..."

"If you're looking for pity, go talk to Millie," I grumbled.

I expected her to bother me more, but she simply gave a sigh which spoke of a world of misery and anguish, and then returned to sorting herbs. A little while later, Millie hurried into the den.
I was right. She didn't even look at me. Her concern was all for Briarlight.

As soon as I get better Millie, you will be the first one to go.

A/N: Hope you enjoyed, sorry for the wait. Here you go! Thanks for all the comments on the last chapter! :D

Chapter Nineteen: Parents and Deathberries

I was allowed to leave the medicine cat den a few days later. Blossomfall, who had visited me every day, had to support me but I was able to limp outside. I sucked in the fresh air and gave a grateful sigh. I squinted as the sunlight blinded me. I had forgotten that it was so bright. I waited for my eyes to adjust.

The stone walls seemed taller than they had before. Everything seemed different, even though it was really all the same. The camp seemed so crowded and I couldn't help but feel uncomfortable among all of these cats. But at any rate, my confinement to the medicine cat den had given me a new appreciation for my life.

I had beaten everyone. Icecloud, Squirrelflight, Tigerheart, Dovewing, and even death. Nothing could stop me.

I prepared to destroy my next target. Millie. What kind of sick, twisted cat would kill their own mother? Me. But she's just an overprotective-of-Briarlight, ignorant, oblivious kittypet. She should've never left her Twolegs and corrupted my father's mindset. I'm guessing Graystripe was okay before he met Millie, and even now he was better than her. At least he knew that Blossomfall and I existed.

The ancient gray-furred tom actually came over to us, as if I had summoned him by thinking of him. "I'm glad you're okay, Bumblestripe."

I studied the silver that had covered his whole muzzle, careful not to show what I was thinking. "Oh really? That's why you didn't come to visit me at all?"

"Jayfeather said only two of us could come in!" Graystripe protested. "Blossomfall wanted to see you of course, and Millie would kill the Clan if we didn't let her visit Briarlight."

I snarled in disgust. "That's right. She has to visit Briarlight, her only kit."

I would've stormed off if I could've. But fortunately Graystripe left. I decided not to kill him yet. Daisy, Bramblestar, and Purdy could come after Millie instead. Kill off the most useless cats first.

Jayfeather made me stay in camp for a quarter-moon. I wandered around camp, quickly growing bored. I tried to find out what happened at the Gathering that had taken place while I was in the medicine cat den.

I learned from Jayfeather that ShadowClan had acted as if nothing had happened but Birchfall, the new deputy, had nearly attacked Rowanclaw when Rowanclaw told him that they would get revenge for the "unnecessary attack" because ShadowClan "didn't understand why ThunderClan would want to start a war."

I was finally well enough to leave the camp. I was exhausted though already by the time I reached the Sky Oak, so I rested for a little bit, then continued on.

I knew Millie always went hunting for Briarlight around sunhigh, near the training hollow. I somehow caught a thrush even though I stepped on a twig and alerted it to my presence. I stood with it in my jaws and waited for her to arrive.

Sure enough, I saw her creeping quietly through the grass, stalking a mouse. I could finish her off now, easily sneak up behind her, but if they found clawmarks on another cat's neck, they might suspect that the murderer was still in the Clan. I wasn't sure if I could get away with framing another cat this time. One time, they'd find some evidence that I forgot to hide, and they'd catch me. It was time for me to use a different method.

"Fox-dung!" Millie hissed as the mouse scampered away because her leap had been too short.

"Oh, hey, Millie! I was looking for you! We need to talk! I caught a thrush for you to eat while I talk to you!"

Millie looked at me indifferently. "Whatever, make it fast, Briarlight is waiting. And you need something to eat too, so you can have the thrush."

I shook my head and set the thrush at her paws. "No, I'm good, I already ate. Really."

Millie sniffed. "I prefer mice."

I rolled my eyes. "Seriously?"

Millie sat down and quickly devoured most of it. "It tastes weird."

I wasn't sure if she actually noticed or if she was just saying it to be difficult. "I can catch another one."

"No, then Briarlight has to wait longer." Millie finished the thrush. "Now what did you want?"

I glared at her, with moons and moons of hatred locked inside waiting to be released. "Do you even know you have other kits, Millie? Nope. All you care about is your precious Briarlight. You wouldn't give a mouse-tail if a fox ate me alive right now in front of you. That's why I will be *happy* when you die. I hate you. You're the worst mother ever." I narrowed my eyes even more. "They say hatred is a poison. Well, they say it poisons your heart. I would venture to say that's all good and true, but tell me in a moment, that hatred also will poison the physical bodies of those the cat filled with hatred despises."

Millie's eyes were wide. "What? Wait, my paws are feeling really numb...I can't move them!"

I looked her right in the eyes. "One word. POISON! Just start dying already you miserable, pathetic kittypet!"

My wish was granted.
A/N: Long chapter? Yes? No? Idk, but I tried! I was thinking since we all hate Millie we should start Crazystar's Official Millie Haters Club! xD Thanks for the reads, votes, and comments guys! Hope, as always, that you enjoyed!
How do you think he tried to kill her? Do you think it'll work?

Chapter Twenty: A Prophecy

Jayfeather POV

I had been collecting tansy and catmint at the abandoned Twoleg nest. I trotted back into my den to find some cats in my den. I sniffed the air. Cloudtail was sitting in one corner of the den near my supplies. There was someone else in there too...

"Ow! My paw!" Amberkit wailed, sounding like she was hopping around.

I rolled my eyes. Great, another kit has done something stupid. Useless furballs.

Cloudtail tried to hush his daughter, knowing that I had no fondness or patience for kits. "It's okay, dear, Jayfeather's here now..."

Amberkit only shrieked louder. "It hurts!"

"Yeah yeah, I think you're gonna die. It's a fatal wound that will certainly kill you." I looked in the general direction of the kit, knowing that it always frightened the kits when I looked at them. I enjoyed scaring kits.

Amberkit screamed. "Jayfeather says I'm going to die! But I don't wanna die! I want to be a warrior!"

I almost laughed. "It's the worst wound I've ever encountered in my entire career as a medicine cat. I'm sorry I can't fix it. It's so horrible that..."

"Jayfeather!" Cloudtail protested.

I turned my head towards him. "What? And at any rate, why couldn't Brightheart deal with this! She has enough training to know how to take a thorn out of a paw!"

"Jayfeather, she left camp for the first time in three moons." Cloudtail sounded annoyed. "She took a walk down to the lake because she needed a break."

I sighed and pulled the thorn out of Amberkit's paw, which was rewarded by the most deafening screech of pain in history. You would've thought a badger was slowly sawing her head off, not that, that would be a bad thing. "She needed a break? Well, isn't that a shocker! Who would ever need a break from these three rats?"

Another cat approached, with the uneven steps that told me they were limping. Bramblestar. "Be nice, Jayfeather!"

"Nice?" I scoffed.

"Yes," Foxleap said as he padded in to have herbs reapplied to his wounds.

"Great StarClan, is the whole Clan in my den?" I snapped. "What happened now, another Tigerstar attack?"

Cloudtail chuckled softly. "Jayfeather, why are you always so rude? One day, you're going to seriously hurt somebody's feelings."

I rolled my eyes again. "StarClan forbid that *that* should happen! That would be a catastrophe!"

Cloudtail started towards the den entrance. "Well, thanks anyways, I suppose."

"Take the little rascal with you!" I pointed with my tail in Amberkit's direction.

Cloudtail picked Amberkit up by the scruff and carried her out. "Good-bye, Jayfeather!"

"Good riddance!" I said cheerfully.

I carelessly applied a poultice of marigold and goldenrod to Foxleap's wounds and slapped a few cobwebs on Bramblestar's leg. I knew the ThunderClan leader had lost two lives in the battle: one from a wound that killed him instantly and one from overall blood

loss. He had already lost three to a bout of greencough that wouldn't go away, one to a fox, and one in a border dispute with WindClan. With only two lives remaining, his leadership might be very short. If so, I hoped Birchfall would be a good leader.

Briarlight was still outside basking in the sun as Foxleap and Bramblestar left. I made sure my herbs were still in nice, neat stacks and thankfully they were. At least the whiny, pathetic kit didn't mess with my supplies.

I decided I still had time to go fetch some yarrow so I hurried out of my den and padded into the forest through the thorn tunnel.

Suddenly, a dark gray she-cat with matted, ungroomed fur appeared in front of me. There was no doubt about it; it was Yellowfang. I grimaced and stifled a sigh. "What so-called wisdom does StarClan have to share with me now? Hurry up. I have better things to do with my day."

Yellowfang bared her teeth. "Show some respect."

"I have none for an old, dead fleabag like you." I watched as Yellowfang lashed her tail impatiently. "At any rate, couldn't this have waited for three days? I will be at the Moonpool then."

Yellowfang narrowed her eyes to slits. "I don't have time for your nonsense. This is important!"

"Well spit it out already," I hissed.

"Beware the kittypet's kin." Yellowfang began to fade as the world returned to its normal darkness.

My fur stood on end. Did it mean Firestar's kin? Did it mean...me? I was definitely grumpy but I wasn't dangerous or a threat.

An even worse thought occurred to me. Could it be Lionblaze?

Well, Cloudtail used to be a kittypet too. Maybe it was just one of his little rascals. I hoped it was.

A/N: Sorry if its short I hope you enjoyed Jayfeather and all his

moodiness. You guys know what the prophecy means I'm sure. We can continue the Millie hating discussion in this chapter's comments now! :D I know some of you are reading both chapters at the same time since I posted them like five hours apart so I don't mind comments about chapter nineteen too

Chapter Twenty-One: Not A Murder

A/N: I have things that would move the plot along more than this, but... the first part of this chapter is for all of us Millie haters. XD It is very necessary.

I calmly stood there and watched as her legs began to flail about wildly; it looked as if she was trying to run. Foam seeped from her lips as the poison spread through her body. I shoved her muzzle hard into the dirt as she screamed in agony. My mother thrashed about and her whole form convulsed.
She would be dead in only a few moments. At this thought, my paws felt so light that I thought I might be able to fly with the birds of the sky.

Her eyes were wide and bright with terror. Her claws were unsheathed and they connected with the ground a few times, tearing up clumps of grass. I could still faintly hear her yowls of agony as her blood turned to liquid fire and the oxygen disappeared from her lungs. I realized I was actually helping by suffocating her; she would pass out from no air before the poison finished her. Every time she tried to inhale she would only suck in a mouthful of dirt.

As if it weren't hard enough to breathe for her. I knew from Sorreltail, who had accidentally eaten deathberries as a kit, that the scarlet berries made it feel as if a Clan of cats was standing on your lungs, squeezing them until you were suffocating. The worst part was that it kept you conscious, letting you draw in just enough air to keep you awake but making you dizzy and giving you a headache. But you could feel the scorching pain sear across your chest as your heart slowed and slowed more until it just stopped. It was one of the slowest and cruelest of deaths, perhaps only behind snake venom. Actually that was a good idea if I could lure Bramblestar to a snake-infested place. Unfortunately for me there

was not a "Snakerocks" by the lake like there was in the old forest according to the elder's tales.

I let her muzzle come up for a moment but shoved my tail in her mouth so that she wouldn't scream. At any rate if anyone saw me, I could always say I knew it was too late and I couldn't bear to hear her yowls of agony. The first part was true anyways. Even if someone brought yarrow now, it wouldn't work at this stage. But anyhow, without her muzzle shoved into the dirt, she was able to breathe through her nose.

The spasms became weaker as her life drained away. I was disappointed; I enjoyed seeing her in pain. Her sides heaved as she struggled for air. She had lost the strength to scream so I took my tail away.
I arranged her paws into a normal position, once again so that it looked as if she was sleeping, and wiped the foam off of her mouth with a leaf. I scattered a few dead leaves over the patches of land that her claws had disturbed. I closed her jaws and her eyes, although I was tempted to leave them open so that the look of complete and utter terror remained in them forever. Why? Because it was beautiful to see the oblivious kittypet so afraid. It was as beautiful as a rainbow or a sunset in its own way.

Feeling good about myself, I hurried back to camp.

Birchfall was there to greet me when I returned. "Bumblestripe? Where were you? I thought you went hunting!"

I dipped my head respectfully to the deputy, wishing I wouldn't have to kill him. I kind of liked him for his stubbornness, however, I would have no choice but to murder him because of his position. I would at least remember to give him a quick, painless death. "I was. I couldn't catch anything, I'm so sorry. I guess I haven't recovered as much as I thought."

"That's okay. I understand, you're still hurt from the battle. Why don't you go get some rest and maybe you'll feel better tomorrow morning?" Birchfall nodded towards the warriors den.

I took his suggestion and woke a little past dawn to total chaos. The

Clan was panicking, talking in frenzied whispers to each other. You would think that they'd be used to the dawn patrol finding corpses, right? But no. Bramblestar was trying to calm everyone and stop the gossip and rumors, firmly stating that it might not be ShadowClan and it might not even be murder. Birchfall was parting her fur, searching for wounds or any sign of conflicts. I guessed that they'd already checked her claws. Fortunately, I had cleaned them, scraping the chunks of grass out from in between them.

"This was not murder!" Bramblestar announced finally. "We have had cats that have died for no apparent reason before."

Birchfall nodded definitively. "This was completely unrelated to the chain of murders across the lake."

It almost sounded like sarcasm from the deputy, but I knew him well enough to know it wasn't. He meant and believed what he had said. Once again, they were completely wrong. I almost felt like laughing out loud because they were just so gullible.

There was no proof, no reason to even suspect that it was murder, was there? Nobody would ever know I did it.

Blossomfall walked over, looking more happy than sad. "Hi."

I momentarily considered confiding in her but decided it wasn't worth the risk. "Well, you look stricken with grief, don't you?"

She leaned in and whispered almost inaudibly in my ear, "I know you killed her."

A/N#2: CLIFFHANGER! :P I can't wait to see the comments on this chapter.

Chapter Twenty-Two: Blossomfall

I froze. How could she know? Maybe she was just kidding; after all, my dislike of Millie was no big secret. "Very funny."

Blossomfall rolled her eyes but forced herself to keep speaking softly. "I know it's true. I followed you out of the camp and watched you put the deathberries in that thrush."

My heart stopped. "I did not! I would not!"

"I saw you kill Squirrelflight too," Blossomfall hissed. "And I wasn't there but I'm guessing you killed Icecloud too. I'm not as dumb as Bramblestar."

She knew. She knew everything. "Why don't you go tell him, then?" Why hadn't she told him already? "Do you just want me to confess it to you first?"

Blossomfall shook her head. "I'm on your side. I want to help you. I overheard Bramblestar wondering aloud who to pick as deputy and he was debating between you and Birchfall. He only picked Birchfall because you were hurt!" Her eyes sparkled. "So if we kill Birchfall then you become deputy! The only thing I want in return for helping you is to be your deputy once you are ThunderClan's leader!"

I instantly didn't trust her. "Why, so that you can kill me and become leader yourself?"

"I wouldn't," she promised. "Besides who could be a better deputy then another murderer?"

Do I believe her? Whatever. I need her help anyways. It's easy enough to break a promise.

I sighed. "Very well. You deal with Birchfall and I can handle Bramblestar."

I didn't bother to stay for Millie's vigil that night. I snuck out of camp, knowing that Cloudtail was on guard that night and wouldn't pay me any attention. When I returned, I could just tell Birchfall I wanted to go for a run in the forest at night; that I was restless. Or maybe I'd catch some prey to act like I just woke up early and decided to go hunting.

The ShadowClan dawn patrol always arrived before ThunderClan's did because ShadowClan was closer to the border. I waited for them. This morning it consisted of Dawnpelt, Olivenose, and Ratscar. Perfect.

Dawnpelt bared her teeth. "Oh no, it's you."

I bowed my head. "I owe you. Would you call it even if I let you kill Bramblestar?"

Ratscar looked stunned. "Kill your leader? But that's against the code!"

I looked at my paws. "So is killing your own deputy. He killed Squirrelflight and framed ShadowClan to start a war between our Clans; I saw it with my own two eyes. I would've told someone but who would've believed me? And then he would kill me off if I tried to tell anyone. And now he's planning to attack ShadowClan again at the half-moon." The patrol looked in shock. "Tell this to Blackstar. Four nights from now, I will be guarding camp. You three come in first to kill Bramblestar and I will let you. Then, well of course bring a backup patrol, but if you can get out of camp without having to attack anyone else, that would be ideal. Hurt me a little bit so that it looks like we fought. Kill him as many times as it takes. Okay?"

They all nodded.

"I still haven't forgiven you," Dawnpelt said.

I glared at her and padded off.

On a completely random and unrelated note, a tragic accident happened that afternoon. Blossomfall challenged Birchfall to a tree-climbing contest to see who could climb the highest up the Sky Oak. The ThunderClan deputy wasn't good at anything tree-related but he was never one to back down from a challenge. And so, it was Blossomfall who came away victorious. After it was over, she slithered back down the trunk to the branch Birchfall had balanced on to congratulate him for at least trying. Blossomfall lost her footing and stumbled a few steps forward, bumping into the ThunderClan deputy's hindquarters and sending him plummeting head first towards the ground. Birchfall snapped his neck upon impact. A horribly distraught Blossomfall swore by StarClan that it was an accident and the cats who had come to witness the competition agreed with her. Foxleap, who clearly had a crush on her, tried to console her. Bramblestar didn't blame her either; he knew she hadn't meant to kill him. Or had she?

Moonhigh came and Bramblestar solemnly climbed up the Highledge. "I say these words before StarClan and the spirit of Birchfall, that they may hear and approve of my choice. Bumblestripe will be the new deputy of ThunderClan."

I feigned shock. "Me?"

Bramblestar looked satisfied as he nodded. "Few cats have as much courage, humility, and loyalty as you. You've proved yourself to me a thousand times. You deserve it."

I wanted to laugh as he complimented me. "Wow. I just can't believe it. Thank you so much! I will never understand why you picked me but I will do my best to make sure that you don't regret it. I will do all I can to serve you and my Clan for as long as I am alive." I dipped my head respectfully to the dark brown tabby.

Bramblestar's amber eyes sparkled. "I know you will."

The Clan began to chant my name. I closed my eyes and enjoyed it. Because now, I had more power than ever. It wouldn't be long before I was leader.

A/N: Anything suspicious about Birchfall's death? :P This is

probably the last chapter for tonight but if you need something to read, be sure to check out the books on the account CloudtailGrandmas, it's a joint account which I am the manager of and it has a variety of unique books.
Hope you enjoyed! :D

Chapter Twenty-Three: Invaders in the Camp

So this was it then. The biggest moment of my whole life.
Things would either go perfectly smooth or horribly wrong. I had to hope that this would work.
I settled down by the thorn tunnel near moonhigh, resting my head on my paws. They had to come; they just had to.
Suddenly, someone raked their claws down my side and I let out a genuine cry of agony. Two other figures raced up the Highledge and into Bramblestar's den.
A few groggy warriors stumbled out of their dens. Ratscar let go of me as he hurried to join his Clanmates, nearly slipping as he scrambled up the Highledge. I dashed after them. "Bramblestar! I'm coming!"
I saw looks of confusion on others' faces as I ascended upwards. They apparently didn't understand. "They're trying to kill Bramblestar! Help me!"
I entered the den and hurled myself at Olivenose. The three ShadowClan warriors had the massive dark brown tabby cornered at the back of the den, with Olivenose and Dawnpelt pinning him to the ground. I targeted Olivenose since I assumed that Dawnpelt wouldn't forgive me for tackling her.
Bramblestar writhed desperately, but his eyes lit up when he realized who had come to help him. "Bumblestripe! Thank StarClan you're here."
Olivenose swiped her claws across my nose and I yowled with fury, biting her ear. We rolled across to the den entrance, exchanging blows. Other ThunderClan cats were trying to get up to help but ShadowClan's backup patrol had come, forming a tight half-circle in front of the pathway and creating a barricade that prevented the others from saving their leader.
I kicked Olivenose in the face and sent her tumbling out of the den, back down to the ground. ThunderClan cheered as they saw I had "beaten" the warrior.
I whipped my head towards Bramblestar, who remained unable to

free himself as Ratscar and Dawnpelt held him to the ground. I rammed my head into Ratscar's shoulder, sending him flying, but at that moment Dawnpelt sliced her claws across Bramblestar's throat. His body convulsed a few times and then was still.
"Bramblestar!" I screamed. "No! You mangy fox-hearts!"
When Bramblestar stirred again, since unfortunately that wasn't his last life, Ratscar and I were locked in a vicious battle. Ratscar wound up with his paw firmly planted on my chest. "And now you can watch us kill your leader again!" he said.
I thrashed about. "No! Let me go! I have to save him!"
"Bumblestripe, thank you for trying," Bramblestar murmured. "Dawnpelt, you can have me. Just let him leave."
I shook my head. "Never! I will never leave you!"
Dawnpelt laughed. "Aw, how sweet. Let them say good-bye to each other before we kill Bramblestar, I suppose."
Bramblestar looked at me. "It's not your fault, Bumblestripe. You tried to save me. You were always willing to die to protect your Clanmates. I couldn't have asked for a better deputy or warrior. Thank you."
"Bramblestar, no!" I protested. "I'm not ready! Don't leave me!"
Bramblestar closed his eyes. "You were born ready."
Dawnpelt's claws raked across his throat again. I shrieked in horror as his flanks fell still.
Suddenly, Spiderleg and Lionblaze burst into the den. Apparently, they had finally broken through the wall of warriors. Lionblaze knocked Ratscar away with the force of ten warriors while Dawnpelt barely dodged out of the way of Spiderleg's attack. The two ShadowClan cats fled from the den, out into the clearing to find that their Clanmates had been driven off. They sprinted towards the thorn tunnel and vanished.
I crouched by Bramblestar's body, ostensibly wearing a look of consternation but hoping in my heart that it had been his last life. If not, my plan had failed. "Bramblestar? Please? Wake up? We chased them off now, please don't be gone. Oh, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry! I tried to save you!"
"How many times did he die?" A voice asked from behind me.
I whipped around to see Jayfeather. "Twice."
Jayfeather bowed his head. "That was his last life. I'm sorry."
"No!" I howled.
Yes! I silently celebrated in my heart.

His fur was groomed and the Clan honored him that night. I went to sit vigil for him along with most of the other cats, wondering who to choose as my deputy. Blossomfall was the obvious choice of course, but I didn't trust her not to just kill me. I was worried because I understood a murderer's mindset well enough to know that if I were in her situation as deputy, I would kill me. I mean, look what I just did to Bramblestar! But...I wondered, would she kill my deputies until I appointed her? Or would she reveal my crimes for breaking my promise to her?

Moonhigh came. The Clan waited expectantly in the clearing, whispering to themselves. I overheard some of the rumors and it seemed that everyone expected me to pick Blossomfall because she was my sister. Well, how'd they figure that one out so fast?

I climbed the Highledge for the first time. The view took my breath away. I could see the whole camp from here, a mass of cats clustered around one point, waiting to hear my announcement. My paws tingled with excitement. Was this how it felt to be a leader? To have the power to control...well, to control the whole world it seemed!

I focused my eyes on the moon, a bright, silver crescent that was illuminating this clearing as well as all of Silverpelt. The great StarClan warriors were merely white dots in an ocean of darkness, completely powerless to change anything. "I say these words before StarClan and the spirit of Bramblestar, that they may hear and approve of my choice." All eyes turned to Blossomfall, who puffed out her chest and lifted her head with pride. "The new deputy of ThunderClan will be Mousewhisker."

A/N: Wow :O Who expected that? Thanks again for all the comments, I really do love hearing your thoughts they help me improve my writing and they motivate me with all my laziness to write faster! Hope you enjoyed!

Chapter Twenty-Four: The Moonpool

I had insisted on taking the long trek to the Moonpool alone, refusing Jayfeather's company. Ancient pawprints marked the path that led down to a shining expanse of blue water that held a trace of purple in it. Small waves lapped against the shore, with the crashing sound echoing through the hollow.

I prepared myself, knowing StarClan wouldn't be pleased with me, and touched my nose to the surface. Instantly my muscles went rigid, as an icy cold spread through my body. I shivered as my eyes shut and darkness covered my vision.

I opened them to find an empty clearing surrounded by bushes with a large oak tree in the center. The Gathering island. There wasn't a sign of the StarClan warriors. I looked up at the sky, wondering if something had gone wrong.

I gasped as I saw the stars spiraling down from the sky, growing larger and larger. They took the form of countless warriors, a multitude of shimmering, frosty felines surrounding me in every direction. White fire blazed in their eyes and a wintry glow brightened their pelts, making them sparkle.
They spoke as one. "Welcome, Bumblestripe. Are you ready?"

Was nobody going to mention my crimes?

I refused to show fear and nodded. "Hurry up."

"Patience, *dear*." Squirrelflight stormed out of the crowd and glared at me.

At that moment, I knew StarClan hadn't forgiven me. I tried to move and unsheathe my claws but my feet were rooted to the spot. She met my eyes with a gaze so cold that it made a blizzard look warm. Her nose pressed against mine and I suddenly got a new

impression of stars. They weren't fire because they weren't warm. They were cold, perhaps like snowflakes that stayed in the sky and never came to earth.

A jolt passed through my body. I could feel it inside my skull, rattling my teeth until I thought they would fall out. An intense pain pressed behind my eyes and I wondered if they would pop out of my head. Claws scraped across the roof of my mouth and I tried to scream but my jaws were firmly clamped shut. Scenes flashed in front of me. I realized slowly that this was how Squirrelflight felt when she died. She said something about loyalty but I almost didn't hear it at all.

She stepped back and the pain stopped. Trying to maintain my dignity, I glared back at her as she retreated.

Icecloud was next. Her death felt similar to Squirrelflight's. The feeling of soaked sticky fur at my throat, a searing pain lancing across my neck, the shudders traveling up my body, and the agony that made me feel as if my brain was exploding. Her life was for kindness.

Yet she had been innocent. I couldn't bring myself to meet her gaze as she walked away.

Tigerheart was next. I looked at him with a venomous hatred burning in my eyes.

His nose brushed mine. Suddenly, something smacked into my side and I lost my breath. I experienced weightlessness then felt as if my head was literally ripped off. A snap echoed through my mind, deafening and leaving my ears ringing.

Dovewing. I had forgotten she was so beautiful. Her fluffy gray pelt that looked as soft as the feathers that lined the nests in the nursery. I wanted to bury my head in her fur for a moment and forget all of this. Her touch could rescue me although nothing else could. But there was no kindness in those gorgeous green eyes. I couldn't afford to be weak, to let love control me again. I forced a look of disgust onto my face and wrinkled my nose.

I felt something pressing down as hard as it could on my chest, squeezing all the air out of my lungs. Icy claws dug into the delicate skin on my stomach and tore out a clump of fur. Flames spread across my body, scorching my sides and my stomach. I couldn't find air. And then when I finally found the strength to bear the agony of that wound, repetitive blows struck my stomach. My head was on fire and the world spun. I felt my strength seeping away along with the blood oozing out of my wounds. My legs couldn't support me; they were so numb and were trembling uncontrollably. The weight was lifted from my lungs but I still couldn't breathe due to the agony. I felt my legs buckle underneath me and suddenly, the pain was gone, and I was lying on the grass. Dovewing stalked away and I was certain that I was still about to die.

Millie marched forward in an arrogant manner and I knew instantly that this wouldn't be fun. "Bumblestripe, I suggest that you stay laying down."

I wanted back away from her, but I was stuck there, unable even to stand.

I couldn't feel my legs; I couldn't feel, well, anything. Suddenly, my legs jerked in every direction, smashing into the ground. My head banged against the grass and I tried to scream only to be unable to suck in anything but dirt. I was choking on my own tongue and my whole body was burning slowly. My heart was on my fire, pushing against my chest. My blood had turned to acid. Something sharp and hot pierced the left side of my skull, traveled through my brain, and re-emerged on the other side, leaving me with a splitting headache. The lack of oxygen was allowing a black cloud to creep up over my vision. I tried to retreat into unconsciousness but then a small trickle of air was allowed in through my nose. My chest was the center of the agony, as it tried to push out of my rib cage. I could feel it. My heart felt even worse now, and I simply couldn't bear the agony. But it wouldn't stop; it only intensified. My muscles ached from the spasms.

It finally ended, leaving me still shaking, and I could still feel the burn in my chest. I somehow found the strength to stand. "I...am g-glad that...I made y-you feel that...pain. You d-deserved it...more than a-any other cat."

Next came a light brown tabby. "Owlclaw? What are you doing here?"

Owlclaw glowered at me. "Foxleap killed me in the battle you orchestrated."

His nose touched mine.

My sides were being shredded. But then, claws struck my neck. My head screamed as it felt like it exploded, sending my eyes, my ears, my tongue, and my nose all in different directions, but all of them were still burning in midair.

The next one was a dark brown tabby with sorrowful amber eyes. Bramblestar. His eyes were dark and disappointed. "I trusted you. But you let me down. I get to give you two lives since you killed me twice."

Both deaths were practically identical. The claws tearing my neck apart. The burning headache.

I hoped those were the last two lives, since my body had long since been unable to withstand any more pain. But I mentally counted and realized that I'd only been given eight lives. I braced myself wearily for more pain.

It was Firestar who padded forward though. I was certain that I had not murdered him.

His green eyes looked into mine as our noses met. A calm peace overtook me, forcing every muscle in my body to relax. Everything would be okay. It was the same feeling I had when Dawnpelt was about to kill me. "There's still hope for you, Bumblestar. I give you this life for change, that you may regret your actions. It's not too late for StarClan to forgive you. It's up to you to decide your fate. Change your ways and become one of ThunderClan's greatest leaders of all time."

Did they really think that making me experience the pain my victims had felt would make me regret my crimes? They actually only made me more proud of my achievements. "I will become the

greatest leader the lake has ever seen. But not the way you're thinking."

A/N: Long chapter here! :D Hope you enjoyed thanks again for all the lovely support and comments!

Chapter Twenty-Five: Improving the Clan

I don't know how I found the strength to make it back to camp. All I wanted was to collapse in my den. But instantly I was surrounded by a swarm of cats.

Cherrypaw bounced in front of me excitedly. "Bumblestar! I passed my assessment! Can you give me my name, please?"

"Patience is a necessary trait of a warrior," I purred.

The apprentice reminded me of a better, younger version of myself.

Poppyfrost hurriedly led her kit away. "Cherrypaw, leave Bumblestar alone! I'm sure he's exhausted."

I heard high-pitched shrieks of laughter and saw Seedkit and Lilykit tumbling over my paws.

Seedkit and her sister looked at each other and spoke in unison. "What was it like?"

I chuckled. "I can't tell you. StarClan's secrets must remain a mystery."

Now that I was back at camp, energy flooded through my paws. I was the leader of all of these cats!

I climbed up the Highledge with renewed strength. "Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather beneath the Highledge for a Clan meeting!"

At my call, every cat stopped what they were doing and flocked around the Highledge, awaiting my words. I liked the feeling leadership gave me.

"As you all know, last night I visited the Moonpool to receive the

nine lives of a leader. StarClan generously granted them to me and awarded me my new name, Bumblestar. I am honored to be your new leader." I looked down at the gathered cats. "It is my greatest wish that I should be able to make ThunderClan stronger. I will start now by naming two new warriors."

Cherrypaw shrieked with excitement and pushed her way to the front of the crowd. Molepaw followed in a more civilized manner. I was amused by Cherrypaw's behavior.

I looked up at the sunny sky, wondering where the stars were hiding behind the bright blue disguise. "I, Bumblestar, leader of ThunderClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down on these two apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend them to you as warriors in their turn. Cherrypaw, Molepaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend this Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

"I do!" Cherrypaw screeched, shaking with excitement.

Molepaw calmly nodded his head. "I do."

I still remembered when I had made that promise, spoken those two empty words. "Then by the powers of StarClan, I give you your warrior names. Cherrypaw, from this moment on, you shall be known as Cherrystripe. StarClan honors your passion and your enthusiasm, and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan."

Cherrystripe dipped her head, seeming satisfied with her new name.

I studied Molepaw carefully. "Molepaw, from his moment on, you will be known as Molewhisker. StarClan honors your courage and your intelligence and we welcome you as full warrior of ThunderClan."

Molewhisker gave me a respectful nod. I felt that I had chosen good names for the two.

"Molewhisker! Cherrystripe! Molewhisker! Cherrystripe!"

I took a deep breath. "Wait, everybody. I have one more

announcement. As I aim to make ThunderClan stronger, I acknowledge the fact that ThunderClan cannot afford to support its weaker members who contribute nothing. They don't fight, they don't hunt, or do anything useful. They just eat the food we work so hard to catch and take up space."

"What are you going to do, get rid of us elders?" Sandstorm demanded furiously.

I shook my head, trying to look horrified. "Of course not! The elders have earned their rest from seasons of service to their Clan, and I wouldn't be the one to deny it to them. I'm just trying to explain why I must force Daisy to leave. She is completely useless."

"What?" Daisy screamed. "But I can't leave my kits! If...if I leave then they will come with me and you'll lose valuable warriors AND your deputy."

Toadstep stood up. "No. Bumblestar is right. You're pathetic and worthless. Leave."

Mousewhisker lifted his chin. "I'm staying right here. I belong in ThunderClan. Being the deputy of my Clan is more important to me than losing my mother."

Daisy tried to speak. "But I..."

"Mousewhisker and Toadstep, you can escort her to the WindClan border. Make sure she leaves," I growled. "If anyone catches her on our territory again, I expect you to treat her as an intruder. Meeting dismissed."

I had actually made a good choice. It seemed that Mousewhisker would do whatever I asked him to do. I wandered down to the lake, wishing to relax and be alone with my dark thoughts. Perhaps I'd take a nap by the water.

"How could you kick Daisy out of the Clan?" A deep voice hissed behind me.

I whipped around to see a cream-colored blur flying at me. I unsheathed my claws by instinct and slashed them across the air,

connecting with skin. The body slammed into me and I found myself pinned under Berrynose's weight. I expected him to scramble to his paws and plant his foot on my chest, then to look down at me with an accusatory gleam in his eyes. He didn't move. I slithered out from under him and took a glance at his body. I guess I had better aim than I thought.

It looked as if my blow had hit his throat, as I saw a large gash at the bottom of his neck, oozing scarlet blood.

A/N: Haha hope you enjoyed this! :D I've uploaded 7 chapters in 4 days all from the app! WBI is all I've been doing for the past few days lol

Chapter Twenty-Six: Hazelkit

I grew a bit paranoid, I suppose you could say. After how easily Bramblestar was disposed of, I feared that I would have the same fate. I insisted on having two guards stationed outside my den while I slept. Mousewhisker selected them, but never chose Blossomfall. I would've never gotten any sleep if she was my guard because I didn't trust one hair on her pelt. At least I had a valid reason to tell the Clan to explain the guards and my odd behavior; every cat knew how Bramblestar had died. But while they assumed I was worried about ShadowClan, I knew that it was Blossomfall that I didn't trust. Even after a quarter-moon had passed, I still remained convinced that she was simply not killing me now so that I wouldn't expect it.

I was having another restless night in which sleep evaded me. The few times I managed to drift off, my sleep was plagued by vivid nightmares; memories of the naming ceremony. I was sure the pain would always be there and that I would feel it forever. That particular evening, I had imagined that I was experiencing Berrynose's death. I was losing my grip on reality slowly but surely. When I was violently jolted awake, I wondered if my life was the dream. Perhaps this was another dream, and I wasn't really awake yet. I waited for the three ShadowClan warriors to burst into the den and tear my body apart, a nightmare which I had, had before. I peered into the darkness. There was nothing. Rosepetal and Cherrystripe sat calmly outside the den, protecting me from any dangers that could materialize out of the shadows.

I tried to hide my mental state from the Clan. But sometimes, when I saw things I couldn't explain, I panicked. I walked into my den two nights after I kicked out Daisy, for instance, and I saw Tigerheart, just sitting in there, waiting for me. I screamed and ran out of there, receiving weird looks from my guards. I walked back in, claws unsheathed, only to find an empty space, unoccupied.

The day after that, I selected a plump mouse from the fresh-kill pile

and settled down to eat it. I nibbled at it half-heartedly and glanced at the pile again only to find that the prey had morphed into the bodies of dead cats, the ones that I had killed. I looked down at my mouse and found that it wasn't a mouse, it was Dovewing's corpse. I hadn't eaten in the five days since.

I could feel the hunger gnawing at my stomach but ignored it. If I tried to eat, I'd find myself nibbling at a dead cat's skin. I felt dizzy as I padded out into the clearing, dismissing my guards. After exchanging looks, they both vanished into the warriors den, with Cherrystripe trailing slightly behind Rosepetal.

I wandered out into the forest in the dark alone and instantly realized it was a bad idea. It was too late to turn back now; I padded onwards. I pretended that I was on a mission, as if Bramblestar hadn't died in ShadowClan's attack, except this time I would bring WindClan to kill him instead of ShadowClan. With a new sense of purpose and independence, my mind cleared and my paws led me towards the WindClan border.

I stopped as I heard voices. They weren't the fake, loud, hissing voices that spoke in my head sometimes, when I was imagining that someone was following me or watching me. They were instead quiet and urgent, speaking in soft whispers. The sound was coming from my right.

I found Daisy and Hazeltail, sitting close to each other. Hazeltail flinched as I stepped out of the bushes and Daisy's eyes widened with alarm. "What's going on here? Chase the intruder off our territory and give her some scars to remember. NOW!"

Hazeltail gulped nervously, but raised her head defiantly. "No."

"No?" I roared.

I unsheathed my claws and leapt at Daisy. The she-cat scampered off and I landed on the ground neatly. "You get back to camp, Hazelkit."

Hazeltail glared at me. "My name is Hazeltail."

I chased after Daisy, all the way to the border stream. Hoping she would stay away, I returned to camp near dawn.

I scaled the Highledge and summoned the Clan. "I have called you all to announce that there is a traitor in our midst! I found this she-cat chatting amiably with an intruder!"

"It was my own mother!" Hazeltail protested, shifting uncomfortably under my glare.

I gritted my teeth. "I warned everybody not to speak to her! Now you will be punished for it! For the next moon, you will sleep in the nursery. Every cat must call you Hazelkit. You can't go anywhere without Sorreltail's permission and supervision. You will play moss-ball every morning with the kits, you may not enter any dens other than the nursery, and you must eat only once a day."

"What?" she shrieked. "A whole moon? As a kit? This is ridiculous!"

I laughed. "For the next moon, you will be treated as and are a kit. Meeting dismissed."

Hazeltail stomped off towards the warriors den to find her brother Mousewhisker blocking her path. "What are you doing?"

"I'm sorry, kits aren't allowed to disturb the warriors. Go back to the nursery and find your 'mother.' Does she know where you are? I'm going to have to tell Bumblestar that you tried to bother the sleeping warriors so enjoy your punishment, Hazelkit! It's okay, you'll be an apprentice in a moon or so!" Mousewhisker chirped, speaking rapidly.

Hazeltail was then shoved over to the nursery by her brother. "Stop this! Whose side are you on?"

Mousewhisker forced her through the tiny entrance meant for small kits. "Isn't that clear? I've always been and will always be on Bumblestar's side!"

A/N: Has leadership driven Bumblestar 100% mad? Comment with your thoughts please, thanks for reading!

Chapter Twenty-Seven: The Lake and A Prisoner

I decided to try and eat a thrush. I brought it outside of camp and closed my eyes while I ate, swallowing it down even though it tasted sour and salty in my mind, like blood. That way, even if it transformed into a dead cat, I wouldn't see it.

I padded down towards the lakeshore, finding the place where I had buried Berrynose. I always had an excuse for my murders; as far as the Clan knew, he had found me and notified me that he was leaving to go live with his mother at horse-place. I wondered if Hazelkit had asked Daisy about him. Maybe she knew it was a lie? All the more reason to keep her confined to camp and the nursery.

I saw a cream-colored she-cat nearby; I realized I had wandered over to what was close to the border between ShadowClan's side of the lake and ThunderClan's.

She was looking at me with cold amber eyes. "Bumblestar. I suppose it is fate that we meet again."

"What are you doing here?" I hissed, refusing to be friendly at all.

The memories were overwhelming me. I feared getting trapped in them yet again. I tried to block them out, not wanting to show my weakness in front of this she-cat.

Dawnpelt shrugged. "I could ask you the same question. I saw you down here and wanted to make sure you weren't planning to come up into our forests. ShadowClan has no desire to share prey with your Clan."

I could feel the memories taking over me. Knowing I was about to get lost in a flashback, I stared hard at the water and tried to act as if I was thinking.

A paw was crushing my lungs. My flanks were burning, and my stomach felt like it was on fire too. Those amber eyes looked so amused, as if she enjoyed seeing me suffer. She raised a paw, ready to finish me off, ready to kill me.

Gasping for air, I returned to reality. She would regret ever laying a claw on me. Rage boiled inside of me.

I leapt at her, barreling into her side. Surprised, Dawnpelt tumbled into shallow water as I pinned her to the ground. While keeping a paw on her chest as she raised her head to keep it out of the water, I dragged her with my teeth into deeper water, where it went up to

about my shoulders. I placed my other paw on her neck. She writhed beneath the water, needing oxygen. She hadn't even had time to take a deep breath.

I removed the paw on her chest, knowing all I needed was one at her throat. I laughed and unsheathed my claws, raking them across her stomach. She tried to scream and choked on a mouthful of water.

Wanting to prolong her death, I let her surface momentarily and take a few breaths, in which she coughed up water and gasped for air. I guess Dawnpelt thought I was letting her go with just a warning; no, I wanted to take her life, the same way she'd wanted to take mine.

I plunged her back underwater with a strong forepaw. Drowning wasn't that cruel compared to other things I'd done. It was just basically suffocating a cat. There wasn't that much pain; just dizziness and a headache as lack of oxygen knocked you out. I had to add more agony, more suffering. Dawnpelt didn't deserve such an easy death.

My claws found her soft stomach again, and I tore out clumps of fur from her sides as well. She thrashed desperately as she was forced to endure the agony and suck in mouthfuls of water.
I raked my claws repeatedly across her flanks and her stomach until she fell unconscious. Then I lifted the limp, lifeless body out of the water by the scruff, knowing she wouldn't wake up just by taking a few breaths of oxygen and swam awkwardly out to deeper water. I left her body there on the lake bottom, hoping nobody would ever find it. Paddling furiously, I returned to the shore, pulling myself out and shaking my fur dry. If Dawnpelt's body was found one day, perhaps they wouldn't realize it was murder. There was no reason to suspect such a thing...except for the clawmarks I left on her stomach.

Oops.

I had gotten my revenge. Revenge. Revenge was a blow best dealt with the element of surprise. Wait...yet again my thoughts wandered to Blossomfall. Perhaps she was using the same plan.

"There will be no surprise," I hissed to the trees, my gaze sweeping around. "I am watching my back. Always. I will never trust you. Some cats don't deserve to be trusted."

I was one of them, of course. Only a fool would trust or believe a word that came out of my mouth. Fortunately, ThunderClan was filled with fools, brainless servants who lacked a mind of their own. I should rename it IdiotClan.

I emerged through the thorn tunnel to find the Clan gathered around a prisoner.

"I found this cat hunting, or trying to hunt, on our territory. I brought the rogue back as a hostage so that you could decide what to do with it," Mousewhisker declared.

I studied the prisoner, a scrawny she-cat with scarred flanks that showed her ribs. "Hold her in the medicine cat den with no food for five days, then bring her back and I will decide what to do with her."

Five days passed. I spent most of that time watching our newest kit with amusement. Hazelkit hadn't been allowed outside during the time that the rogue was in the clearing, so she didn't even know that there was a prisoner. She looked frustrated as she played moss-ball. She asked Sorreltail to take her to the training hollow so she could stay sharp by at least practicing her hunting and battle moves and was reminded that kits couldn't leave the camp. The real kits mocked her, forcing her to lie down on the ground while they jumped on her stomach, bouncing up and down. "This is what ThunderClan does to traitors! Hazelkit is a traitor!" Seedkit and Lilykit chanted.

I was proud of those kits, and reminded myself to make them apprentices early, even though they were only five moons old.

She had to take naps with the kits, and she wasn't allowed to stay up past sundown. Amberkit, Snowkit, and Dewkit woke her every morning early at dawn by screaming, "Wake up, fox-dung!" in her ear as loudly as possible. They might've woken me and half of the other cats in the camp too with that loud of a shriek, but I didn't

mind. ThunderClan's youngest members had great potential.

The prisoner was led outside, squinting as her eyes hadn't adjusted yet to the blinding sunlight. "Bring Hazelkit out here please."

Looking indignant, Hazelkit marched out of the nursery. She looked shocked as she saw Mousewhisker restraining the rogue she-cat. "Daisy!"

Hazelkit hadn't learned her lesson yet. I sighed inwardly. I had no tolerance for cats like her.
"Hazelkit. I will restore you to warrior status and end your punishment if you kill the intruder now." I glared at Daisy, who whimpered, receiving a blow to the head from Mousewhisker for making a noise.

Hazelkit closed her eyes and then unsheathed her claws. I was surprised. Would she actually do it?

She padded up to Daisy and locked eyes with her. Mousewhisker apparently thought this was as entertaining as I did, because his eyes were glowing with excitement. He nodded to Hazelkit, signaling for her to attack, waiting eagerly for her to slice her claws across his mother's throat.

Hazelkit tensed her muscles and trained her eyes on Daisy's neck. She leapt, soaring through the air. Time slowed down. Daisy watched with wide eyes as Hazelkit lowered her head, closing her eyes.

She collided with Mousewhisker, sending him tumbling to the ground. Mousewhisker yowled with fury and kicked upwards with his hindlegs, catching the kit in the stomach and knocking her off of him.
With a brief glance of gratitude to her daughter, Daisy raced off, running for her life. She vanished through the thorn tunnel and I was pretty certain that, that was the last we'd see of her.
However, Hazelkit would pay for making me lose the opportunity to kill that worthless she-cat...

A/N: What's going to happen to Hazelta...I mean Hazelkit? XD

thanks for reading hope you enjoyed!

Chapter Twenty-Eight: Complaints From The Elders

Mousewhisker had Hazelkit pinned in a few heartbeats. I nodded with satisfaction, leaping down from the Highledge and padding up to the she-cat. I firmly placed a paw on her chest and told Mousewhisker to let go.

My gaze swept around the Clan. "This is what we do to traitors. Let this serve as a reminder. Mousewhisker. Kill her slowly."

The deputy nodded without hesitation, immediately obeying. Her screams echoed across the hollow as Mousewhisker began gradually shredding her, claws tearing her sides and her stomach apart. I winced at every yowl of pain. What was wrong with me? I was supposed to enjoy seeing cats in agony.

Suddenly, my own stomach burned and I clenched in my teeth to hold in a screech of pain. My vision blurred and I found a paw on my chest. Mousewhisker loomed over me, tearing apart my soft stomach. A searing pain shot from my flanks to my head, pushing hard behind my eyes. I tried to throw him off, but it was useless. Hazelkit was weaker than I was, and now she had lost too much blood to move at all.

Suddenly, I was thrown back into my own body. I gratefully drew a breath of cool air into my lungs. I felt my heart still pounding furiously, my legs still trembling with fear. Another scream sent shivers up my spine as Mousewhisker continued to torture his sister. I backed away from her, tripping over my own paws, knowing she couldn't move.

I surprised even myself. I didn't yell, "Stop!" and push Mousewhisker away from her. Instead, I watched her with amusement written in my gaze and then doubled over, laughing. Cold, sinister laughter pierced the air as Hazelkit fell unconscious and Mousewhisker dealt the death blow. I managed to choke out a few words to dismiss the

meeting in between bursts of maniacal laughter.

My lungs gasped for air yet I couldn't stop laughing. When it finally stopped, I coughed and took a few deep breaths, feeling light-headed from lack of oxygen. I looked up to see the elders, Sandstorm, Dustpelt, and Purdy, and one senior warrior, Brackenfur, marching towards me.

Sandstorm looked furious. "How could you?"

"I did nothing." I casually licked my ruffled chest fur, to show my indifference.

"You're just like Brokenstar!" Dustpelt snarled.

That got my attention. "No. I think Brokenstar would kill you just for questioning his decisions."

Rolling his eyes, Dustpelt stormed off and the other elders followed him. Brackenfur lingered.

"Watch your back," the senior warrior hissed. "One day this will come back to haunt you."

Was that a threat? Was Brackenfur one of Blossomfall's cats? Was he going to try to kill me for her?

I hurried over to Mousewhisker, who was standing over Hazelkit's body. "Don't ever let Brackenfur guard my den. Ever. And if you become leader, whatever you do don't appoint Blossomfall as your deputy. Not even if she's the only cat in the Clan."

My deputy said nothing, but I could tell he was curious as to the reasons behind my orders.

"Brackenfur is too old. He couldn't defend me against any attack of any kind."

I wasn't going to even try to explain my misgivings about Blossomfall.

"Oh that's fine, you didn't need to explain why, Bumblestar. I know

that all the decisions you make have good reasons behind them." Mousewhisker padded away, vanishing into the warriors den.
I couldn't have a better deputy.

But I wondered, how many cats had Blossomfall recruited? Could I trust anyone? Could I even trust Mousewhisker?

I tried to fall asleep that night and couldn't, with all the thoughts racing around my mind. I slowed my breathing and pretended to be asleep, then waited for soft pawsteps to reach my ears and a cat to quietly sneak into my den. I wondered if perhaps they were in there and were just stealthy enough that I couldn't hear them. I could almost see them through my eyelids, claws hovering a whisker away from my throat. I heard pounding sounds above me and flinched. Voices hissed to each other outside and then I heard two sets of pawsteps in my den. I snapped open my eyes and jumped to my feet, unsheathing my claws and slicing them at one of the figures. It took a moment to recognize the shape of Spiderleg, with Ivypool right beside him.

"Great StarClan, I try to get out of the rain so I don't catch a cold and Bumblestar tries to kill me!" Spiderleg muttered, sounding annoyed.

I looked out the entrance to the den and saw a downpour of rain coming from the clouds. I realized that was the pounding sound I'd heard. "Sorry. I thought you were an intruder."

I saw puddles forming at their paws as water dripped off of their drenched coats. Spiderleg shook himself dry and I wrinkled my nose as some of the droplets struck me. I backed away as Ivypool followed his example. The two stationed themselves by the den entrance and stared out into the camp. I settled down in my nest and acted as if I was sleeping until dawn. I didn't want to sleep, frightened that I would have a painful nightmare in which Brackenfur and Blossomfall and perhaps the whole Clan were trying to kill me.

I felt exhausted and didn't remember much that happened the next day, as I was unable to think properly. I forced my eyes to stay wide open while my eyelids wanted to close and carry me off to the land

of horrors, sleep.

I "woke" early the next day as well and padded out into the clearing. My head felt foggy, as if my brain had been stuffed with feathers. My paws felt as heavy as boulders as I dragged them over to the fresh-kill pile. I nearly screamed as I felt something hard and cold, instead of warm and tender, in my mouth. I dropped it and through blurred, tired vision saw that the fresh-kill pile was made of dead cats' bones. Somehow I was certain that I had been holding a bone from Dovewing's leg.

A/N: Just when you thought he couldn't get any crazier...prepare for a shocking ending and then I have officially decided that there WILL be a sequel! Tell me in the comments if you're excited for the sequel! :D

Chapter Twenty-Nine: The ThunderClan Deputy

I decided that I did trust Mousewhisker after he agreed to kill Brackenfur. There was no obvious reason for me to want his death, but a nightmare I'd had the night before had sealed his fate. After two nights of no sleep, I accidentally dozed off against my will. In the dream, I was completely paralyzed and lying on sandy ground. Brackenfur had dug a hole and pushed my body into it, then kicked sand over it, locking me in the darkness forever. I was suffocating, my lungs were burning, and I had a vicious headache, yet I couldn't recede into unconsciousness. I was stuck there, in darkness, choking, in pain forever.

The real target should've been Blossomfall, but I feared retaliation from her numerous followers that she certainly had within my own Clan. I didn't trust her at all, and yet I couldn't simply kill her off. There was no answer to this problem, at least none that I could see.

Late at night, Mousewhisker summoned the senior warrior outside. I watched from the shadows, crouching behind the apprentices den.

Brackenfur looked confused. "Yes? You wanted me?"

Mousewhisker sliced his claws across the air. Brackenfur saw it coming just on time and stumbled backwards. The deputy growled with frustration and leapt at Brackenfur. The senior warrior sidestepped and pulled Mousewhisker's hindlegs out from under him as he landed. Unbalanced, my deputy toppled over and collapsed onto the ground. Brackenfur planted a paw on Mousewhisker's chest.

"What was that for?" Brackenfur demanded.

I emerged from my hiding place, ready to save my deputy, but before I could do anything, Brackenfur dealt the death blow. He clearly didn't trust Mousewhisker not to kill him if he let him go.

Shaking with fury, I crept up behind Brackenfur as he studied the wound in Mousewhisker's neck and the emptiness in his eyes. I pushed the senior warrior over and without hesitation, swept my claws across his throat. I then hurried over to Mousewhisker's body.

I blinked a few times, in shock. Mousewhisker couldn't be dead, he just couldn't.

A few warriors had heard noises outside apparently because they padded out of their den to find me staring listlessly into space, standing over Mousewhisker's body. I turned to face them as they began to ask questions. "I killed Brackenfur, but only because I watched him murder my innocent deputy."

In complete disbelief, I walked slowly into the warriors den and curled up in my nest. As much as I hated sleep, for once I wanted to hide in its world, a world that was no worse than the one I woke up in every day. The nightmares I had were only things that followed me from reality to my dreams, after all. That night, I was forced to watch Brackenfur kill Mousewhisker over and over again.

I realized when I woke that I should've sat vigil for Mousewhisker, but it was too late. I wished I could bring him back. I still needed him. He was the only cat I could trust with my life. Now, I had nobody. I was completely on my own.

Cats spoke to me, but I said nothing to anyone. I had lost the ability to speak or to understand their words. Their sentences sounded like nonsense to my ears. The only way to communicate with me would be with claws, not with words. Combat was the only thing I understood anymore.

I wondered if perhaps I wanted to die. Perhaps I should let Blossomfall kill me and put me out of my misery. I had absolutely nothing to live for. Not a single living soul loved me, I had no friends, and I didn't even have any cats on my side. It was me against the world. Life was constant pain and suffering; perhaps I wasn't evil, and had just been doing the cats I murdered a favor. All I ever felt was misery, loneliness, bitterness, and anger. I had forgotten what happy and satisfied meant.

I wished that Dovewing hadn't rejected me. I would trade all of my power and my leadership away, to have her back and to have her pick me. To have her never have known Tigerheart existed. If she had only chosen me, none of this would've happened. She was the one cat that could've made me feel happy, that could've eased my hurt from Millie's negligence. I wouldn't be sitting here in despair, regretting that I had ever been born and wishing for the impossible; to go back in time and undo all my crimes of the past. I wouldn't be feeling utterly hopeless, unable to believe life could get better because things only ever got worse.

Let Blossomfall be the deputy then. Let her enjoy her leadership, if she can. But one day, her brother's murder will come back to haunt her. In that moment, I will still be there. It'll be my last legacy.

A/N: OH NOES! Mousewhisker died! :(Two chapters left! We are almost ready to start the sequel.

Chapter Thirty: Plans

It was no surprise to anyone that I appointed Blossomfall as the deputy. I didn't really care anymore, but I remembered that I was going to make Seedkit and Lilykit apprentices early. I assigned Lilykit to Foxleap and Seedkit to Cherrystripe, rushing through the words I had to recite so that I could return to my den and hide in the back corner for the rest of the day. I waited for Blossomfall to kill me; I had no doubts that she would try.

Nobody guarded my den anymore. Blossomfall wasn't selecting anyone, even though I was sure she knew she was supposed to, giving me all the more reason to be suspicious. It didn't matter though, because I wanted her to kill me. I was done with living my life in fear and misery.

I had started a border dispute with WindClan the day after I selected Blossomfall as my deputy just so that I could have one more battle before I was sent to the Dark Forest. ThunderClan didn't win the battle, which even I knew had been completely pointless and unnecessary. I lost two lives in that fight, and knew that now I was prepared for whatever method Blossomfall would choose to kill me. Death wasn't that painful anyways. Life was the true agony, a horrible mixture of despair, grief, heartbreak, misery, and sorrow. I couldn't bear it anymore; I had just experienced too much hurt. A cat can only suffer so long before their will crumbles and they lose the motivation to pursue their dumb hopes and impossible dreams. We all will reach the same conclusion that I have come to now: life isn't worth living and death is much kinder than life. At one point, it's time to just give up and wait for death to come to you. If you're a more popular cat than I am, well, if you don't eat anything or you don't drink any water, eventually you will die of starvation or thirst, and then you can live a happy life in the sunny fields of StarClan with its infinite prey and constant peace. If Blossomfall didn't kill me, I was considering using that plan. But I was certain that she would kill me, as certain as I was that the sun would rise the next morning so that another stupid day could begin and the torture of

the previous day could repeat itself. She was as fox-hearted as I was. There was no doubt in my mind that she would find some way to murder me.

And so, I was simply waiting for my inevitable death. I was done running from it. *Let it come to me now*. After all, I deserved it.

Blossomfall POV

I snuck out of camp at sundown, two days after I had been appointed as deputy. Bumblestar knew I wanted to kill him, at least I thought he did before he picked me. Maybe he was as much of a fool as the other cats. Or did he have other reasons to appoint me? Perhaps he wanted to catch me in the act. That is why I was going to be sure that there was no evidence that I did it.

I traveled by the lakeshore to cross through WindClan territory and then padded into horseplace, feeling slightly nervous. I squeezed through a hole in the walls of a barn and found two cats, a tom and a she-cat, talking quietly to each other. The she-cat looked small and frail, but the tom was muscular and had a scarred face, a sign of past battles. The tom's black pelt would blend in perfectly with the shadows.

The tom leapt to his feet and unsheathed his claws. "What are you doing in here?"

I dipped my head. "I need a cat to do me a favor. I can pay you in...well, what do you need?"

"Need?" He thought for a moment. "Stream here has whitecough. Do you have herbs?"

I nodded. "I can give you catmint and tansy. What's your name?"

"Night," he replied. "But that's not important. Could we hurry up and do whatever favor you need? Stream might get worse the longer we're gone."

Night and I set off at a brisk pace. Night seemed tense, and I assumed that he was worried that WindClan warriors might catch us. "Don't worry, Clan cats don't really patrol that much at night."

Night said nothing. We crossed into ThunderClan territory shortly after moonhigh, and the tom relaxed underneath the trees. "I'm sorry. I just don't like open spaces."

Neither did I, or any other ThunderClan cat. Perhaps he'd make a good ThunderClan warrior, considering he seemed to enjoy being in the forest and he looked pretty muscular

I led the rogue to the camp, to the thorn tunnel that led into the stone hollow. I pointed with a forepaw to the leaders den. "A very evil murderer sleeps in there. While he's asleep, I need you to sneak in there right now and kill him. He may have more than one life. Kill him until he dies permanently."

Night looked curious. "More than one life?"

"Clan leaders have nine lives," I explained.

He looked confused, but didn't ask any other questions. He hesitantly padded into camp. Cloudtail, who I had purposely chosen to guard camp, had fallen asleep on duty. I watched as he vanished into Bumblestar's den.

I decided to act like I had gone hunting because I woke up early. When the camp was in chaos when I returned, I would remind myself to act confused. Once I "learned" that Bumblestar had died, I would act like I was shocked and I would try to show some grief or sorrow.

I was always planning to kill Bumblestar, or any leader, if I ever became deputy. The fact that he was my brother didn't change that. Only a weak cat lets their family stop them from accomplishing their goals. Once I was leader, I would rebuild the Clan that Bumblestar was destroying. Unlike him, I actually intended to make life better for ThunderClan. I would possibly recruit those rogues, Stream and Night. I could name the tom Nightstripe, to remind myself of my brother, and Stream could be Streamheart. Something told me that those two would be willing to join. I didn't think Streamheart had much potential, but Nightstripe could be a great fighter, a warrior as good as Lionblaze perhaps. Lionblaze was strong and skilled, and I saw the same traits in Nightstripe.

With me as the leader, every cat around the lake would fear ThunderClan, and nobody would be able to defeat us in battle. During my reign, I would make us strong again.

Only Bumblestar stood in my way.

A/N: Will Night succeed? Find out in the epilogue, the dramatic conclusion to WBI! :D

Epilogue

I closed my eyes, having just woken from a nightmare about Squirrelflight killing me. I thought I heard pawsteps and I lifted my head. Nothing. Just shadows.

Then, one of the shadows took the form of a cat and placed a paw on my chest. I thrashed about, seeing an unfamiliar jet black tom with bright green eyes pinning me to the ground. He prepared for the death blow. I flinched as his paw swung downwards and struck my head.

Pain shot up my neck and I found that I couldn't breathe. Death gripped me with icy claws, and I found myself in StarClan, recovering from losing a life.

As soon as I woke again, opening my eyes and weakly trying to throw the rogue off, he killed me again...

3rd Person POV

After Bumblestar lay still, not breathing or moving, Night padded off and found Blossomfall out hunting. Blossomfall surprisingly honored her bargain and gave him the herbs, which she had taken from Jayfeather's abandoned Twoleg nest.

She returned to camp and realized Night must've hidden Bumblestar's body, because it wasn't in his den. She told the Clan that Bumblestar had been killed by a ShadowClan patrol while wandering through the forest, and that she had chased them off and then buried his body because she didn't want to have to carry it back.

Blossomfall announced that Thornclaw would be the new deputy. Blossomfall and the golden brown tom were good friends, so it wasn't a big surprise. Thornclaw also had much experience, and was the perfect choice.

She wondered what would happen when she encountered her brother in the Dark Forest one day. He certainly wouldn't have forgiven her; Bumblestar held grudges for a long time. Or maybe she would be able to make up for her murders by being a great leader; maybe she would make it to StarClan.

That was unimportant though. For now, she was alive and the leader of a fine Clan. Her brother was gone, and no cat would need to worry about his unpredictable actions anymore. ThunderClan could be rebuilt under a wise leader.

Tomorrow, she would journey up to the Moonpool to receive her nine lives. Jayfeather would accompany her; she wasn't going to be like Bumblestar and force him to stay behind at the hollow for her ceremony.

Every warrior in the Clan thought she was stricken with grief by her brother's tragic death and the end of his leadership. But in reality, this just proved her belief that every end was a new beginning. This was the beginning of her time, and she was excited to see how much she could accomplish.

It was time for Blossomfall's Reign.

A/N: End of Book 1!

Important Please Read!

And so the sequel will be called Warriors: Blossomfall's Reign! It's now up with the prologue written and published! Thanks for all the incredible support I received on this story and I hope you'll read the sequel too! There might be Bumblestar POV from after he died?